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# MEMORIES OF THE MEN WHO SAVED THE UNION

By

DONN PIATT

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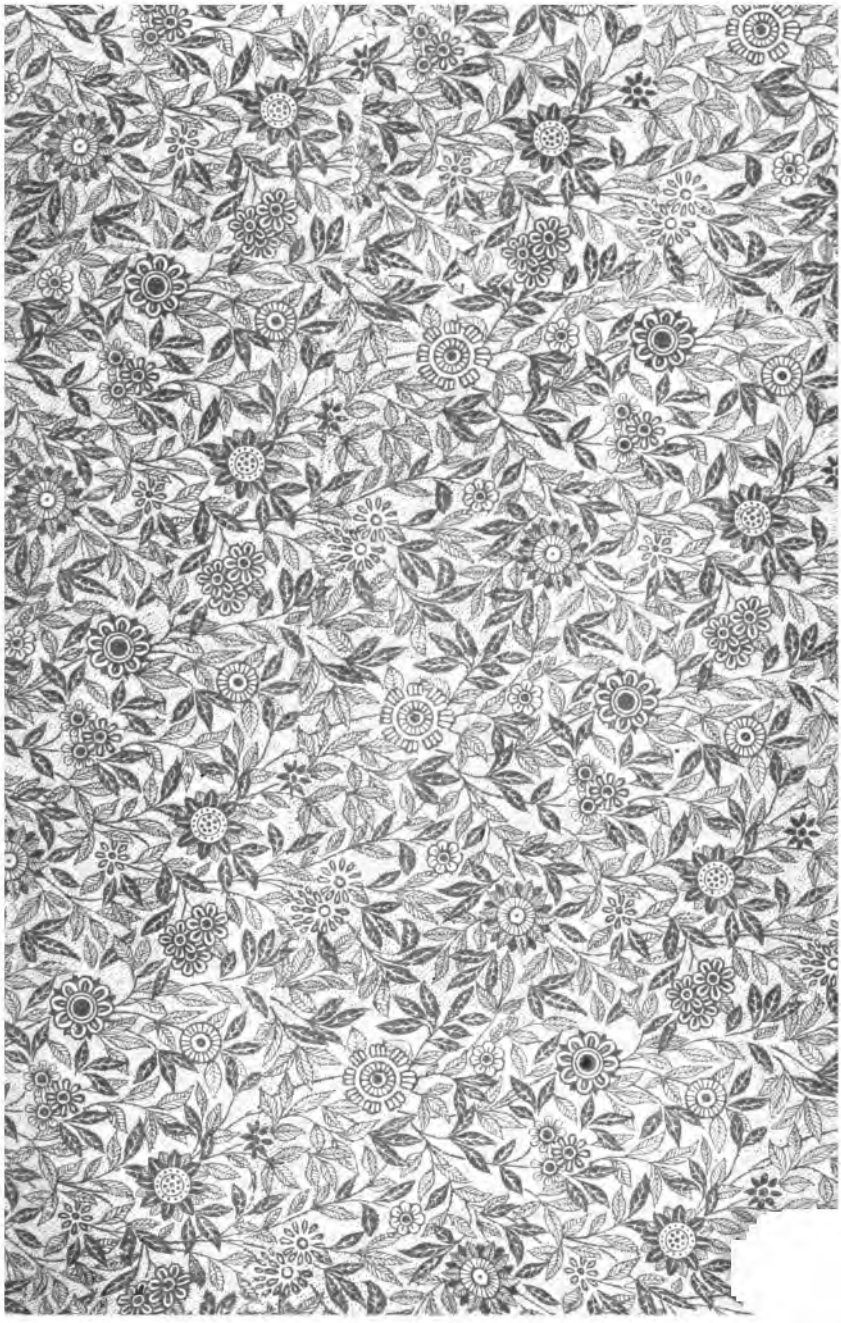

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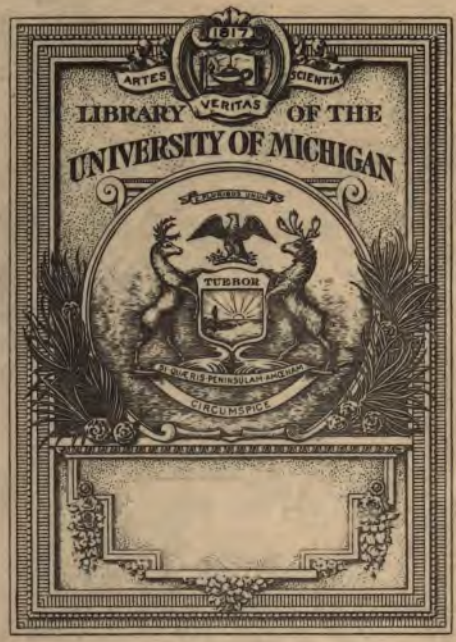


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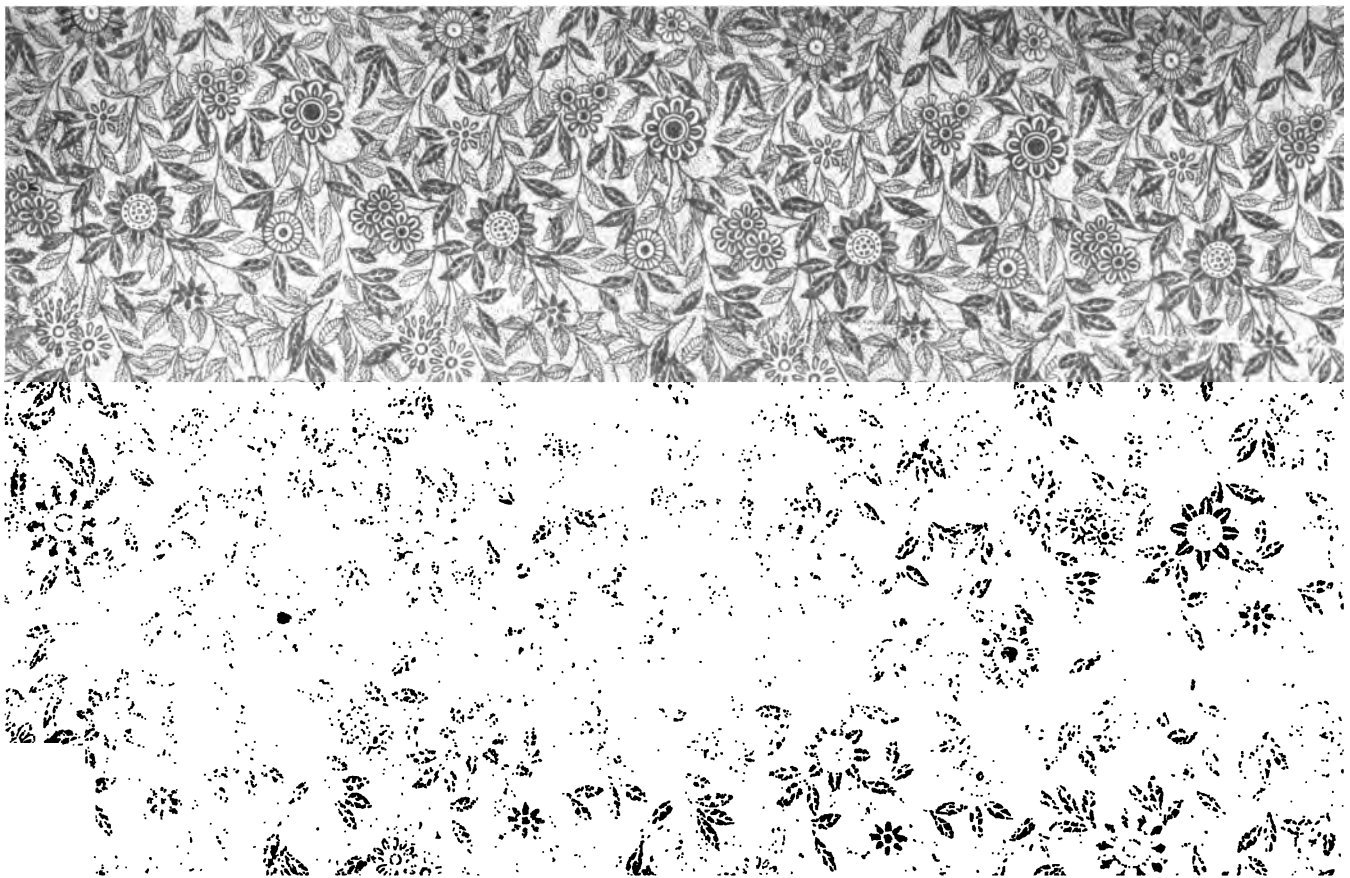

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Geo. H. Thomas

UNIV. OF

# MEMORIES

OF THE

# MEN WHO SAVED THE UNION

BY

JAMES PLATT

NEW YORK AND CHICAGO
BELFORD, CLARKE & COMPANY
1887

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BY

DONN PIATT

NEW YORK AND CHICAGO
BELFORD, CLARKE & COMPANY
1887

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Gift
Miss K. MacBride
12-20-1928

*TO MY BROTHER,*

**General A. Sanders Piatt,**

*WHOSE DISTINGUISHED SERVICES IN THE LATE WAR,*
*SCHOLARLY ATTAINMENTS, AND HIGH CHARACTER, HAVE*
*ADDED LUSTRE TO THE NAME WE BEAR,*
*THIS BOOK*
*IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.*

"The world knows nothing of its greatest men"

—PHILIP VAN ARTEVELDE.

"The real heroes of this war are the 'great, brave, patient, nameless PEOPLE.' It is to their service through these varied scenes that we now gladly turn. The victory was not won through Generalship—it is a libel on the word to say that Generalship delayed for four years the success of twenty-five millions over ten millions, or required a million men in the closing campaigns to defeat a hundred thousand. It was won by the sacrifices, the heroism, the sufferings, the death of the men in the ranks. Their story we now seek to tell."—"*Ohio in the War*," by WHITELAW REID.

"West Point turns out shoulder-strapped office-holders. It cannot produce Soldiers; for these are, as I claim, born, and not made. And it is susceptible of demonstration that the almost ruinous delay in suppressing the rebellion and restoring the Union; the deadly failure of campaigns year after year; the awful waste of the best soldiers the world has seen; and the piling up of the public debt into the billions, was wholly due to West Point influence and West Point commanders. They were commanders, but they were not soldiers."—"*Recollections of a Private Soldier*," by FRANK WILKESON.

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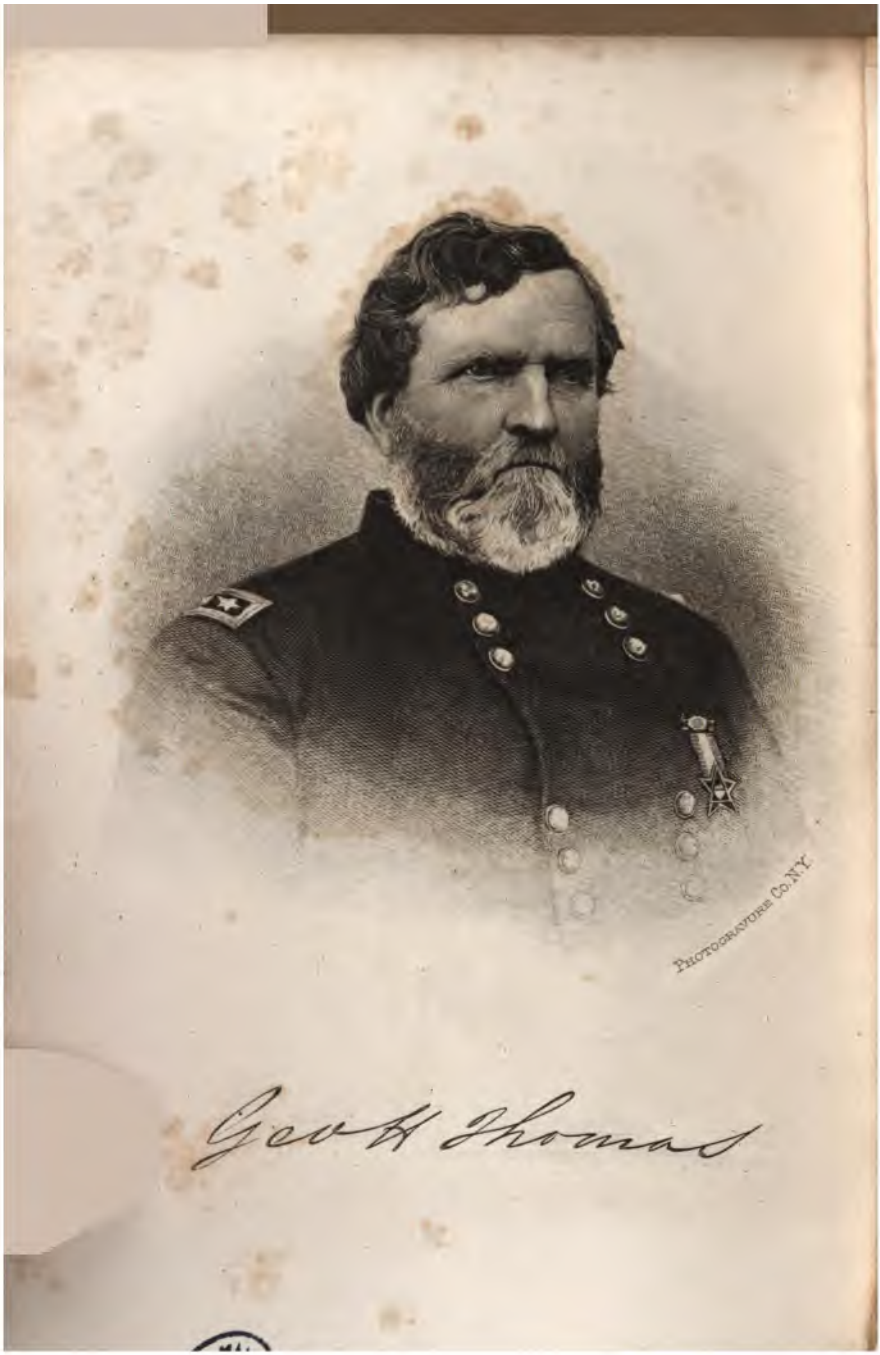
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To understand why it is that we have more than one military hero to set up in an open space at the capital, we must take a more philosophical view of the late conflict than that indulged in by the popular mind. When the late war broke upon us in all its fury, it found the South partially prepared, and the North taken altogether by surprise. The war element the Confederate leaders could draw from in the Slave States at once, and that the North knew nothing of, was the fanaticism that for nearly two years kept an army in the field, that girt their borders with a fire that shrivelled our forces, as they marched in, like tissue paper in a flame. How those men fought the world will never know, for it cannot be told. Born and bred amid scenes of turmoil and lawless disturbance, accustomed to arms, and familiar with violent deaths, they were animated by a feeling of wrath that the word fanaticism feebly expresses. For two years this held them to a conflict in which they were invincible. The North poured out its noble soldiery by thousands, and they fought well, but their broken columns and thinned lines drifted back upon our capital with nothing but shameful disaster, to tell of the dead and dying, the lost colors, and the captured artillery.

This violence lasted nearly two years. It spent its fury on the solid heroic force of the North. No defeat, however shameful and disastrous, discouraged our noble people. No man worthy of the name of man doubted our eventual success. The land might be

appalled at the bloody results of important fights; desolation might enter into all the households and spread mourning over the country, and yet at every call troops came, and one general failed only to be followed by another. The men at the South, half-starved, unsheltered, shoeless, and in rags, weakened in their victories, and the time came when it was possible for a hundred and forty thousand to drive back sixty thousand. I say this grew into a possibility, although in his victorious march from the Rapidan to Richmond the Federal general left in dead behind him more men than the Confederates had in the field.

The Confederacy reached the zenith of its fortunes at the battle of Gettysburg. It fell as rapidly as it had risen. But it went down fighting. We have to consider all this when we come to measure the war men. It is no exaggeration to say that Grant, Sherman, and Sheridan are great in the eyes of the multitude only because they happened to be in command when the Confederacy fell from sheer exhaustion. Had they been put in the field at the head of our armies when the unfortunate McClellan went down, they would not have lived thirty days. The last doctor, or rather the last dose, has the credit or discredit, in the eyes of the ignorant, of the cure or the killing of the patient. Grant was not only on horseback when the Confederacy ended, but he died under the shadow of Lee's surrendered sword; and that shadow saved him and his sons from the aw-

ful fate of the partners when they sought to realize millions on Army and Navy contracts; and this mighty shadow keeps his tomb green with immortelles from a people that could forgive all to a man who was in at the death of so terrible an enemy.

It is strange what magic lingers about the mouldering remains of Virginia's rebel leader. His very name confers renown upon his enemies. The pure white hands are folded over a heart once so grand in its emotions that his life seemed that of a saint, and his deeds made so sacred a bad cause that a revolt rose to the dignity of a great war. As I have said, the shadow of his surrendered sword not only gives renown to an otherwise unknown grave, but blinds the common mind to the frightful slaughter that led up to that surrender, and the awful corruptions that did more to degrade and destroy our Government than Lee's armed hosts.

Aside from all other considerations, it does not speak well for the pride of our people that we should be eager to accept such lack of generalship as the inhuman butcheries that followed the continuous "hammering" of a greatly superior force upon a fierce enemy, upon the understanding that we could lose two lives to the enemy's one, and so win through attrition. The sixty thousand dead between the Rapidan and Richmond, the like proportion sleeping in humble graves between Chattanooga and Atlanta, tell of the heroic devotion of the poor fellows who volunteered to fight and, if necessary, die for their

country, but history will fail to find therein material for monuments to generals.

The mystery attending General Grant's eminence, aside from the fact that he was in at the death of the fierce Confederacy, is of easy solution. After the war, while he hung doubtful between the party he had acted with and the party in power, he was seized on by the last named as so much political capital, and used in that direction for far more than he was worth. Recognizing the inevitable found in the "military bullet-heads," as Hawthorne expressed it, and bound to make Presidents for years to come, the Republican party made Grant their own. The press of the country, that is, in the main Republican, the tremendous army of office-holders and office-seekers are, and have been, united in making a hero of a man whose operations in the field will not bear inspection, and whose Civil Service and financial operations can be condoned only on the ground of his miraculous ignorance and stupidity. There is nothing so fierce, unforgiving, and unreasonable as political partisanship in the United States; but this very partisanship renders short-lived the falsehood it seeks to make permanent. Already the noise is dying out, and as the truth comes forth from the Confederate side, dust gathers on the tomb of this one hero built up at the expense of others more deserving. The demand that bids us worship at the shrine of Grant, while we are to turn our backs upon and neglect the real hero of the war, George H.

Thomas, is one that cannot long be obeyed by the people, especially by the thousands that, serving under him, felt his kindness shown in his care of them, and recognized his greatness in his deeds.

In common with other and more philosophical observers, I could well leave the proper adjustment of claims to the sober second thought of those coming after us to whose decision we must bow in submission, but for the exasperating fact that the admirers of the meretricious, not content with erecting monuments to their gods, are busy as thieves stealing from the monuments of others. In Italy I have not only seen temples to false gods despoiled to erect churches to the true God, but I have looked on great monuments of art despoiled to build hideous lodging-houses for shop-keepers. It remained for us to mutilate the tombs of the deserving in order to set up memorials to others whose right to praiseworthy recognition is more than doubtful.

After all, as I have said, the war part of the late civil conflict, that has so absorbed public attention, made but one-third of the task imposed upon the Administration in its defence of our national existence. The weary sweat of anxious toil, the work planned by great minds and carried out by patriotic hearts, in that terrible struggle, seems lost in the roar of the armed conflict amid the glare of devastation that followed the appeal to brute force. The popular mind fails to perceive that lying back of all this noise was hidden the quiet brain power, as in the

iron-banded boiler and still cylinder is concealed the noiseless force making possible the rattle and roar of machinery that come to stun one while the work is being done.

Had victory, through armed conflict, been all that Abraham Lincoln and his able advisers and statesmen were called upon to accomplish, the task had been easy. The people responded with patriotic ardor to the call to arms, a hundred thousand at a time; the ingenious ability of Salmon P. Chase provided the money necessary to keep the army in the field; and Edwin M. Stanton clothed, armed, organized, and fed. Even without military ability in our generals, it was a mere question of time when the Confederacy would sink exhausted. The great danger that menaced us lay in European interference, against which that greatest of all Secretaries of State guarded; and second only to this was the danger from secession, or, as it was popularly called "copperhead" sympathy that lay coiled, ready to strike at the patriotic North. How this crept into the army itself, and found expression at General McClellan's headquarters, I have striven to tell in these pages. Since they were written, McClellan's own story has appeared, and in it my reader will find confirmation, strong as proof of Holy Writ, of all that I have asserted. Every page of the story bristles with denunciation of the Government at Washington, and the celebrated Harrison Bar letter is given, in which the great military failure, with

cool audacity, undertakes the entire control of the civil Government.

Even when public attention is called to the great statesmen at Washington, there is a strange perversity in the popular mind that keeps it from seeing its favorites precisely as they were. Lincoln, Stanton, Chase, and Seward were great enough without exaggeration. To take them precisely as they were is to justify our hero-worship. Our people are not content with that, and their heroes must be idealized beyond recognition to secure content in the popular mind. This is to be regretted; for, while it adds nothing to the greatness of the popular idols, it robs them of those weaknesses of humanity that insure love as well as admiration. The interest that attaches to human endeavor is based on the sympathy we feel in the struggle, against odds, of one who fights not only adverse outside influences, but weaknesses within for something higher and better than their lot. The perfect man has nothing of this. He is the God-protected Achilles in the epic where the unprotected Hector is the hero.

While authors of fiction are coming to understand that the real is the basis of good work, biography is yet held to the old-fashioned Plutarchian process of idealization. And yet biography is supposed to deal with facts, and gets its ground for approving faith in its adherence to nature. When Cromwell ordered the painter to reproduce on canvas the wart nature gave his face, he left us a portrait that told, beyond

the telling in words, that it was a true likeness of the man that scorned to lie. In like manner, when Froude published the private papers of Carlyle, he gave us a better philosophy than Carlyle had ever written. While the few are angered at the destruction of what they wanted to believe, the sympathy of the many is awakened by the dark picture of a great man who struggled wofully through life against bodily ills that would have made a common man a criminal.

"Give me the truth," said the great Napoleon to his marshals, when they went out to fight without his immediate supervision, and the truth is what we want if we seek to be benefited by history.

Recognizing this, I wrote, some two years since, for publication, my recollections of Lincoln, and the impression that great man made upon my mind. I strove to depict him as he appeared to me, without the distorting glamor of a great war and a high office. I painted the wart upon his face. This article gave rise to a huge volume of Lincoln literature, beginning with some twaddle of General Grant, and ending with the impressions of reporters. I had failed to hit the popular ideal, and my sketch, to which every essay in the book was an answer, appeared at the end, instead of being, as it was in fact, at the beginning.

Reading that volume, I found interest, if not amusement, in the treatment of common belief therein presented. When this is summed up it means an elong-

ated oddity of tears and gross fun. He is the historical Job Trotter of those troubled times, and when not telling questionable stories, is weeping over some case of distress. These narrators do not seem to be aware that they are belittling their subject, and that if they succeeded in securing a settled conviction the grandest character in our annals would appear to posterity as a weak clown, ready to jeer or weep at a moment's notice. None of this is true. I saw Lincoln at Springfield, Illinois, shortly before and shortly after his first election to the Presidency. I found him then what he proved subsequently to be, the man I told of in my sketch. This does not differ from the many impressions collected in Allen Thorndyke Rice's book, save in two particulars. I said he was a man of coarse, tough fibre, through which ran a vein of humor; and who, while good-natured in manner, was not remarkable for kindness of heart. To these views the world at large, and these many contributors, take exception.

It is common for the popular mind to accept a good-natured, easy manner for kindness. The fact is, such manner is proof of the reverse. A man of real kindness in his nature is apt to be rendered irritable in his efforts to remedy or alleviate the many woes and right the many wrongs that beset his path. Old Sam Johnson, for example, had the hide of a bear and the heart of a baby. I have known many such, and so have you, my reader; for a knowledge of, and a sympathy for, those who

suffer arouses a just indignation against the wrong-doer, and makes the true philanthropist irritable and combative. The good-natured man is the one who selfishly avoids all trouble and, finding that it is easier to go through life in harmony with all, is prolific of smiles and kind words, and is not sparing of good deeds when such can be done without sacrifice of comfort to himself.

No better illustration can be had of what I am striving to say than in the true characters of Lincoln and Stanton. The last-named has gone to his grave marked as the hardest man ever in office. And yet, knowing them both intimately, I can say with truth that Stanton had the kinder heart of the two. He was made by nervous disorder extremely irritable, and his manner was, at times, positively brutal. Under this rough exterior beat a heart that made him the most tender of husbands, affectionate as a father, the truest of friends, and when touched by some instance of sorrow and misfortune, the readiest to act, and act at a sacrifice to his own comfort or well-being.

It is strange how men can be blind to the effects of their own assertions. No man ever rose to eminence as a leader of men through a cultivation of the amiable virtues. The man who has no enemies has no following. To be great one must be positive, and gain strength through foes. A man selects his enemies, his friends make themselves, and from these friends he is apt to suffer. "Save me from my

friends," is an old adage. A community chooses its leader very much as one does his blacksmith, not because he is agreeable, but for that he can do the work. There is an instinctive knowledge of this in the people, and in a republic, where the representative represents, we have ability of a certain sort, whether we have honesty or not. Of course this rule fails where money intervenes. The rich have neither morals nor sense, and when they purchase their way into official position, the very foundations of the republic are disturbed.

The amiable man, who has no views with which to offend, no positive characteristics to antagonize others, no high ambition for which to sacrifice his support, may be an official in times of profound peace, but he cannot be a leader in the hour of peril. It is possible for him to be a politician, and follow the masses, but he cannot be a statesman and lead the people. Let the student look over the brief list of eminent men whom we regard as our statesmen, and note the positive character of each, and how little any one of them was possessed of the weak amiability that is supposed to be popular.

Abraham Lincoln had a good-natured, easy way, so far as manner went, but beneath this was a firm character—the result of temperament and training. The son of poor people, "the white trash of the South spawned on Illinois," as Wendell Phillips tersely expressed it, he worked his way up by the hardest study to a leading position at the bar. The title

of "Honest old Abe," it is well known, was given him because of his plausible affectation of simplicity in dealing with a jury. And with a jury he was singularly successful because he understood the common men composing that body, and, getting down to the level of their intelligence, played upon their prejudices. "The best school for a lawyer," said the late Tom Corwin, of Ohio, "is a two years' service on the jury; without the knowledge gained there the advocate is certain to fire over the heads of the twelve good and true gentlemen of the panel."

Remembering that keen sensibility is the result of culture, and that no study so contracts the intellect and subdues the emotions as that of the law, we can easily take the measure of this, our greatest man, without any loss to his real greatness. It is of no use to quote instances, against this conclusion, of cases where Lincoln volunteered in, or without fee fought some poor fellows' claim through to recognition. All eminent lawyers, at some time in their lives, have done this, either from pride of opinion, having some principle to establish, or seeking an advertisement as a physician who practises *gratis* among the poor. I have never known, nor have you, gentle reader, a lawyer who injured his practice through an excessive display of his emotional nature. In embalming a body it is necessary to remove the viscera and brain, and in the popular mind something of the same process has to be gone through with to make a hero.

That man is great who rises to the emergencies of the occasion, and becomes master of the situation. I was once on board a vessel at sea, when, through an accident to the machinery in a storm, we were threatened with destruction. It was not the captain, nor any of his officers, or the demoralized crew we had to look to for safety. A man before then unknown, save as a quiet passenger, came to the front. I can still hear his clear, clarion-like voice, and see his calm yet determined manner, as he took command and, with force and intelligence, directed our efforts. But for him the rotten, leaky boats would have been launched, and the vessel abandoned. The captain saw the madness of such an attempt, but had not the mastery to enforce his opinion. The unknown man had. We were saved from a cruel death by his presence of mind, clear intellect, and control of others. The lesson learned on that trying occasion has remained with me. It taught me not only to know a leader, but to appreciate the qualities that make him such.

The indomitable will that overrides all obstacles, strong in its high purpose, has little regard for the weak, and the pathway of such is strewn with wrecks that a kind heart would waste its powers in attempts to alleviate. When, therefore, one tells me that Secretary Stanton pointed to a sofa in his office upon which Lincoln was wont to throw himself and burst into tears, he is telling of a man who said to General Schenck and me, in the darkest period of

that dreadful war, that he "ate his rations and slept well," and his looks sustained his assertion. That he may have shed tears when Baker was killed I can well believe, but that the man whose iron will and high intellect carried the Government through that terrible war was wont to throw himself upon a sofa and burst into tears is something common-sense rejects as untrue. In like manner it is generally agreed that his indulgence in coarse jokes and humorous stories came from the necessity for relief from the grave cares incident to his high office. Let this be admitted, and where does it leave these eulogists? What man of keen, delicate sensibility could find relief from cares of any sort in jests so coarse that they cannot be put to record? It is well while idealizing a subject to be logical and consistent.

Again, this habit, that ran through his life from the time he was a day-laborer until he died a president, is excused only during the four years of the war, when cares were oppressive. The jokes were then a relief to him! How about the long period previous? Let us see. While a rail-splitter in his early manhood, he was noted for his jokes and stories. Had he the necessity then for relief? As a member of the bar he was accustomed to amuse his associates in the same way. Did the reason for relief apply in that case? As a member of Congress he was a habitué of the cloak-room, holding a circle of amused members, listening to his recital of funny stories. Were the cares of legislation so heavy that

this was necessary? It is all nonsense. The habit of life that had come to be a second nature clung to him through the discharge of duties in the high position to which he had been so unexpectedly called.

Herein lies the real greatness of Abraham Lincoln. There are two sorts of natures that survive the severe strain of high responsibility. One is a dull, coarse temperament that does not know and feel the responsibility. The other is a strong mental and physical nature that accepts the trust with full confidence in itself. It is not the work that kills, but the worry. President Lincoln had no worry. With a strong confidence in himself, and a deep reliance on the rule of right that governs our being, he calmly exercised his power without loss of nerve-force, and so ate with appetite, and slept the sleep of the just. He did not forego the amusement he found in the humor that was part of his nature.

Said Thouvenel, the youthful French diplomat, who wielded such a wide influence under the second empire, in response to my assertion that Louis Napoleon must be a great man to control such a government, "It does not call for more ability to manage an empire than it does to manage a wholesale shoe store, if the emperor only thinks so. See, I lay a narrow plank upon the ground, and any one can walk it. I lift that plank a hundred feet above the earth, and only one in a thousand has nerve enough to do so. The way to govern an empire is not to know that the plank is off the ground. The uncle knew, he had

nerve, the nephew does not know, and nerve is not necessary. Some day he will make a false step and be astonished at his fall."

Abraham Lincoln saw, with some amusement, and at times no little annoyance, his subordinates fret and worry over their work and sink exhausted from the strain, while he held his strength unimpaired. When after Pope's defeat and McClellan's treachery, he saw our armies resolved into a mob and tumbled back on Washington, he made preparations for a removal of the Government with the same quiet coolness with which he welcomed the victorious armies to the capital after Lee's surrender. Had the Administration been forced out of Washington, the people of the North would have seen him at Harrisburg or Philadelphia striving to retrieve the terrible disaster with the same cool courage, and quiet reliance in himself and the ultimate triumph of the right, that distinguished him in his hour of victory. He was a grand man, but to assert that he had a delicate temperament, a fine fibre, is to indulge in a contradictory absurdity; and to say that he was a weeping, willowy, impressionable character is monstrous.

In the historical adjustment of merit due the eminent men of so late a period as the Civil War it is well to remember that we are taught by the rule of evidence to bear in mind that coequal in importance with the character of the witness is the probability of the story. Indeed the highest authority teaches us that the last is of more importance than the first,

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

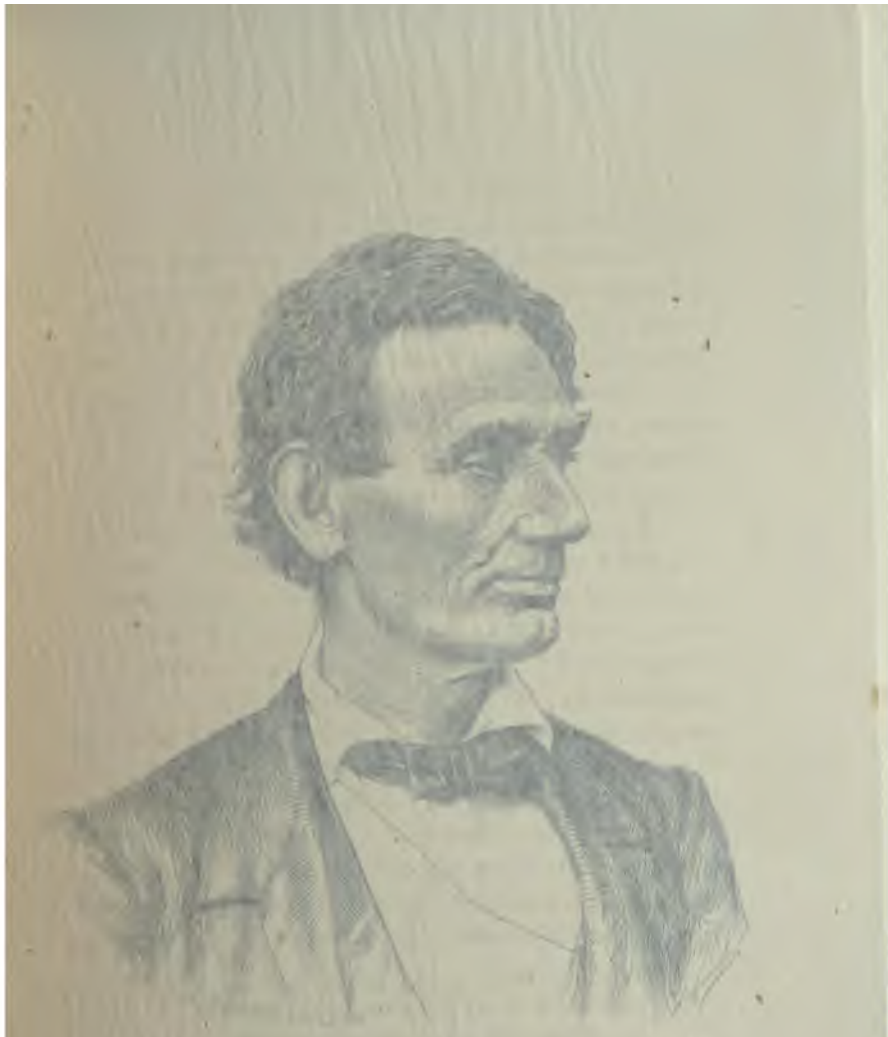
UNIV. OF MICH.

and that if the story is improbable it makes no difference how high may be the character of the witness or witnesses, the testimony cannot command belief. The application of this well-recognized rule goes far toward the settlement of conflicting claims and a recognition of our true heroes. Judged by this rule, not only Abraham Lincoln, but all the statesmen and soldiers about him seem consistent each with themselves, and more truly great to us, than they appear through the exaggerating medium of popular belief.

It is strange now to know that during President Lincoln's term of office, and for years after his death, he was popularly regarded as a shrewd, cunning sort of man, and great stress was placed on his kind, forgiving nature. The one now appears as grossly exaggerated as the other was false. To the more thoughtful his great force of character that covered an indomitable will under a calm temperament, together with an almost mysterious grasp of intellect, marked the man. Slowly the public mind will come to recognize its hero, and dwell entranced upon that grand central figure of the group God called to the front in the woful hour of a nation's peril.

> As stands the pyramid, a mystery
> Cleaving wedge-like the misty realm of time,
> And hides within its depths the unknown king
> 'Twas built to memorize; so common fame
> Covers with cloudy fiction all the real man,
> And leaves a shadow to the worshippers.

MAC-O-CHEE, OHIO, February 17, 1887.



ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

## ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

No greater truth ever found expression in poetic words than that which Sir Henry Taylor puts in the speech of Philip Van Artevelde, when he says "the world knows nothing of its greatest men." The poet restricted his meaning to

> "The kings of thought,
> Who wage contention with their time's decay,
> And of the past are all that will not pass away."

But it extends as well to those men of affairs who earn the admiration of the crowd they control. This ignorance comes of the fact that great men have enemies while alive, and friends when dead, and between the two the objects of hate and love pass into historical phantoms, far more unreal than their ghosts are supposed to be. With us, when a leader dies all good men go to lying about him, and from the monument that covers his remains to the last echo of the rural press, in speeches, sermons, eulogies, and reminiscences, we have naught but pious lies. There is no tyranny so despotic as that of public opinion among a free people. The rule of the majority is to the last extent exacting and brutal. When brought to bear upon our eminent men it is also senseless.

Poor Garfield, with his sensitive temperament, was almost driven to suicide by abuse while alive. He fell by the shot of an assassin, and passed in an instant to the roll of popular saints. One day it provoked contempt to say a word in his favor, the next it was dangerous to repeat any of the old abuse.

History is, after all, the crystallization of popular beliefs. As a pleasant fiction is more acceptable than a naked fact, and as the historian shapes his wares, like any other dealer, to suit his customers, one can readily see that our chronicles are only a sort of fiction duller than the popular novels so eagerly read; not that they are true, but they deal in what we long to have the truth. Popular beliefs, in time, come to be superstitions, and create gods and devils. Thus Washington is deified into an impossible man, and Aaron Burr has passed into a like impossible human monster. Through the same process, Abraham Lincoln, one of our truly great, has almost gone from human knowledge. I hear of him, read of him in eulogies and biographies, and fail to recognize the man I encountered, for the first time, in the canvass that called him from private life to be President of the then disuniting United States.

General Robert E. Schenck and I had been selected to canvass Southern Illinois in behalf of free soil and Abraham Lincoln. That part of Illinois was then known as Egypt, and in our missionary labors we learned there that the American eagle sometimes

lays rotten eggs. Our labors on the stump were closed in the wigwam at Springfield, a few nights previous to the election. Mr. Lincoln was present, and listened with intense interest to Mr. Schenck's able argument. I followed in a cheerful review of the situation, that seemed to amuse the crowd, and none more so than our candidate for the Presidency. We were both invited to return to Springfield for the jubilee, should success make such rejoicing proper. We did return, for this homely son of toil was elected, and we found Springfield drunk with delight. On the day of our arrival we were invited to a supper at the house of the President-elect. It was a plain, comfortable frame structure, and the supper was an old-fashioned mess of indigestion, composed mainly of cake, pies and chickens, the last evidently killed in the morning, to be eaten, as best they might, that evening.

After the supper, we sat far into the night, talking over the situation. Mr. Lincoln was the homeliest man I ever saw. His body seemed to me a huge skeleton in clothes. Tall as he was, his hands and feet looked out of proportion, so long and clumsy were they. Every movement was awkward in the extreme. He sat with one leg thrown over the other, and the pendant foot swung almost to the floor. And all the while two little boys, his sons, clambered over those legs, patted his cheeks, pulled his nose, and poked their fingers in his eyes, without causing reprimand or even notice. He had a face

that defied artistic skill to soften or idealize. The multiplicity of photographs and engravings makes it familiar to the public. It was capable of few expressions, but those were extremely striking. When in repose, his face was dull, heavy, and repellent. It brightened like a lit lantern when animated. His dull eyes would fairly sparkle with fun, or express as kindly a look as I ever saw, when moved by some matter of human interest.

I soon discovered that this strange and strangely gifted man, while not at all cynical, was a skeptic. His view of human nature was low, but good-natured. I could not call it suspicious, but he believed only what he saw. This low estimate of humanity blinded him to the South. He could not understand that men would get up in their wrath and fight for an idea. He considered the movement South as a sort of political game of bluff, gotten up by politicians, and meant solely to frighten the North. He believed that when the leaders saw their efforts in that direction were unavailing, the tumult would subside. "They won't give up the offices," I remember he said, and added, "Were it believed that vacant places could be had at the North Pole, the road there would be lined with dead Virginians."

He unconsciously accepted for himself and party the same low line that he awarded the South. Expressing no sympathy for the slave, he laughed at the Abolitionists as a disturbing element easily controlled, and without showing any dislike for the

slaveholders, said only that their ambition was to be restrained.

I gathered more of this from what Mrs. Lincoln said than from the utterances of our host. This good lady injected remarks into the conversation with more force than logic, and was treated by her husband with about the same good-natured indifference with which he regarded the troublesome boys. There was an amusing assumption of the coming Administration in the wife's talk that struck me as very womanly, but somewhat ludicrous. For instance, she said, "The country will find how we regard that Abolition sneak Seward." Mr. Lincoln put the remark aside, very much as he did the hand of one of his boys when that hand invaded his capacious mouth.

We were not at a loss to get at the fact, and the reason for it, in the man before us. Descended from the poor whites of a slave State, through many generations, he inherited the contempt, if not the hatred, held by that class for the negro. A self-made man, with scarcely a winter's schooling from books, his strong nature was built on what he inherited, and he could no more feel sympathy for that wretched race than he could for the horse he worked or the hog he killed. In this he exhibited the marked trait that governed his public life. He never rose above the mass he influenced, and was strong with the people from the fact that he accompanied the commons without any attempt to lead, save in the direc-

tion they sought to follow. He knew, and saw clearly, that the people of the free States had not only no sympathy with the abolition of slavery, but held fanatics, as Abolitionists were called, in utter abhorrence. While it seemed a cheap philanthropy, and therefore popular, to free another man's slave, the fact was that it was not another man's slave. The unrequited toil of the slave was more valuable to the North than to the South. With our keen business instincts, we, of the free States, utilized the brutal work of the masters. They made, without saving, all that we accumulated. The Abolitionist was hunted and imprisoned, under the shadow of Bunker Hill Monument, as keenly as he was tracked by blood-hounds at the South. Wendell Phillips, the silver-tongued advocate of human rights, was, while Mr. Lincoln talked to us, being ostracized at Boston, and rotten-egged at Cincinnati. A keen knowledge of human nature in a jury, more than a knowledge of law, in his case, had put our President-elect at the head of his profession, and this same knowledge made him master of the situation when he came to mould into action the stirred impulses of the people.

I felt myself studying this strange, quaint, great man with keen interest. A newly-fashioned individuality had come within the circle of my observation. I saw a man of coarse, tough fibre, without culture, and yet of such force that every observation was original, incisive and striking, while his illustrations were as quaint as Æsop's fables. He had little

taste for, and less knowledge of literature, and while well up in what we call history, limited his acquaintance with fiction to that sombre poem known as

"Why should the spirit of mortal be proud?"

It was well for us that our President proved to be what I then recognized. He was equal to the awful strain put upon him in the four years of terrible strife that followed. A man of delicate mould and sympathetic nature, such as Chase or Seward, would have broken down, not from overwork, although that was terrible, but from the over-anxiety that kills. Lincoln had none of this. He faced and lived through the awful responsibility of the situation with the high courage and comfort that came of indifference. At the darkest period, for us, of the war, when the roar of the enemy's cannon was throbbing along the walls of our Capitol, I heard him say to General Schenck, "I enjoy my rations, and sleep the sleep of the innocent."

Mr. Lincoln did not believe, could not be made to believe, that the South meant secession and war. When I told him, subsequently to this conversation, at a dinner-table in Chicago, where the Hon. Hannibal Hamlin, General Schenck, and others, were guests, that the Southern people were in dead earnest, meant war, and I doubted whether he would be inaugurated at Washington, he laughed and said the fall of pork at Cincinnati had affected me. I became somewhat irritated, and told him that in ninety days

the land would be whitened with tents. He said in reply:

"Well, we won't jump that ditch until we come to it," and then, after a pause, added, "I must run the machine as I find it."

I take no credit to myself for this power of prophecy; I only said what every one acquainted with the Southern people knew, and the wonder is that Mr. Lincoln should have been so blind to the coming storm.

The epigrammatic force of his expressions was remarkable, as was also the singular purity of his language. What he said was so original that I reduced much of it to writing at the time. One of these sayings was this on secession:

"If our Southern friends are right in their claim the framers of the Government carefully planned the rot that now threatens their work with destruction. If one State has the right to withdraw at will, certainly a majority have the right, and we have the result given us of the States being able to force out one State. That is logical."

We remained at Springfield several days, and then accompanied the President-elect, on his invitation, to Chicago. The invitation was so pressing that I believed Mr. Lincoln intended calling General Schenck to his Cabinet. I am still of this opinion, and attribute the change to certain low intrigues hatched at Chicago by the newly created politicians of that locality, who saw in the coming Administration

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

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this, attention is called to the fact that through all the war he never permitted a man to be shot for desertion. The belief is erroneous. There never lived a man who could say "no" with readier facility, and abide by his saying with more firmness, than President Lincoln. His good-natured manner misled the common mind. It covered as firm a character as nature ever clad with human flesh, and I doubt whether Mr. Lincoln had at all a kind, forgiving nature. Such traits are not common to successful leaders. They, like Hannibal, melt their way through rocks with hot vinegar, not honey. And that good-natured way covers a selfish more generally than a generous disposition. Men instinctively find it easier to glide comfortably through life with a round, oily, elastic exterior, than in an angular, hard one. Such give way in trifles and hold their own tenaciously in all the more serious sacrifices demanded for the good or comfort of others. If one doubts what I here assert, let such turn and study the hard, angular, coarse face of this great man. Nature never gave that face as an indication of a tender, yielding disposition. Nor had his habits of life in any respect softened its hard lines. Hazlett tells us, with truth, that while we may control the voice and discipline the manner, the face is beyond command. Day and night, waking and asleep, our character is being traced there, to be read by all men who care to make the face a study. It is common, for example, for the President to be in

continual trouble over supposed promises to office-seekers. Mr. Lincoln had none of this. He would refuse so clearly and positively that it left no doubt and no hope, and yet in such a pleasant manner that the applicant left with no ill feeling in his disappointment. I heard Secretary Seward say, in this connection, that President Lincoln "had a cunning that was genius." As for his steady refusal to sanction the death penalty in cases of desertion, there was far more policy than kind feeling in this course. To assert the contrary is to detract from Lincoln's force of character as well as intellect. As Secretary Chase said at the time, "Such kindness to the criminal is cruelty to the army, for it encourages the bad to leave the brave and patriotic unsupported."

The fact is that our war President was not lost in his high admiration of brigadiers and major-generals, and had a positive dislike for their methods and the despotism on which an army is based. He knew that he was dependent on volunteers for soldiers, and to force on such the stern discipline of the regular army was to render the service unpopular. And it pleased him to be the source of mercy, as well as the fountain of honor, in this direction.

I was sitting with General Dan. Tyler, of Connecticut, in the ante-chamber of the War Department, shortly after the adjournment of the Buell Court of Inquiry, of which we had been members, when Pres-

ident Lincoln came in from the room of Secretary Stanton. Seeing us, he said:

"Well, gentlemen, you did not survive the war, and now have you any matter worth reporting, after such a protracted investigation?"

"I think so, Mr. President," replied General Tyler. "We had it proven that Bragg, with less than 10,000 men, drove your 83,000 under Buell back from before Chattanooga down to the Ohio, at Louisville, marched round us twice, then doubled us up at Perryville, and finally got out of Kentucky with all his plunder."

"Now, Tyler," said the President, "what is the meaning of all this; what is the lesson? Don't our men march as well, and fight as well, as these rebels? If not, there is a fault somewhere. We are all of the same family—same sort."

"Yes, there is a lesson," replied General Tyler. "We are of the same sort, but subject to a different handling. Bragg's little force was superior to our larger number, because he had it under control. If a man left his ranks, he was punished; if he deserted, he was shot. We had nothing of that sort. If we attempt to shoot a deserter, you pardon him, and our army is without discipline."

The President looked perplexed.

"Why do you interfere?" General Tyler continued. "Congress has taken from you all responsibility."

"Yes," answered the President, impatiently,

"Congress has taken the responsibility, and left the women to howl about me," and so he strode away, and General Tyler remarked that as it was not necessary for the President to see one of these women, to jeopardize an army on such grounds was very feeble. The fact was, however, as I have said, the President had other and stronger motives for his conduct.

Of President Lincoln's high sense of justice, or rather fair play, I have a vivid recollection. Previous to Lee's invasion of Pennsylvania, rumors of which reached Washington in advance of that suicidal movement on the part of the Confederates, General Halleck issued one of his non-committal orders to General Schenck, then in command at Baltimore, advising the concentration of our troops at Harper's Ferry. This referred especially to General Milroy's 10,000 men at Winchester. I was sent, as Chief of Staff, to look into Milroy's condition, and empowered to let him remain or order him back, as I might see fit. Winchester, as a fortified place, was a military blunder. It covered nothing, while a force there was in constant peril. I had learned enough in the service to know that a subordinate should take no chances, and I ordered Milroy back to Harper's Ferry. General Schenck, at Milroy's earnest request, countermanded my order, and three days after, Milroy found himself surrounded by Lee's entire army. The gallant old soldier cut his way out, with his entire command. Of course there was a heavy loss of

material. For this, Milroy was put under arrest by Secretary Stanton, and court-martialled by Halleck. Milroy shielded himself behind Schenck's order, so that the court convened was really trying my general without the advantages given him, as defendant, of being heard in his defence. General Schenck was summoned to appear, and, instead of appearing, drew up a protest, that he directed me not only to take to the President, but read to him, fearing that it would be pigeon-holed for consideration when consideration would be too late. It was late in the afternoon, and riding to the White House, I was told the President could be found at the War Department. I met him coming out, and delivered my message. "Let me see the protest," said the President, as we walked toward the Executive Mansion.

"General Schenck ordered me, Mr. President, to read it to you."

"Well, I can read," he responded, sharply, and as he was General Schenck's superior officer, I handed him the paper. He read as he strode along.

Arriving at the entrance to the White House, we found the carriage awaiting to carry him to the Soldiers' Home, where he was then spending the summer, and the guard detailed to escort him drawn up in front. The President sat down upon the steps of the porch, and continued his study of the protest. I have him photographed on my mind, as he sat there, and a strange picture he presented. His long, slender legs were drawn up until his knees were level

with his chin, while his long arms held the paper, which he studied regardless of the crowd before him. He read on to the end; then looking up, said:

"Piatt, don't you think that you and Schenck are squealing, like pigs, before you're hurt?"

"No, Mr. President."

"Why, I am the Court of Appeal," he continued, "and do you think I am going to have an injustice done Schenck?"

"Before the appeal can be heard, a soldier's reputation will be blasted by a packed court," I responded.

"Come, now," he exclaimed, an ugly look shading his face, "you and I are lawyers, and know the meaning of the word 'packed.' I don't want to hear it from your lips again. What's the matter with the court?"

"It is illegally organized by General Halleck."

"Halleck's act is mine."

"I beg your pardon, Mr. President, the Rules and Regulations direct that in cases of this sort you shall select the court; you cannot delegate that to a subordinate any more than you can the pardoning power;" and opening the book, I pointed to the article.

"That is a point," he said, slowly rising. "Do you know, Colonel, that I have been so busy with this war I have never read the Regulations. Give me that book, and I'll study them to-night."

"I beg your pardon, Mr. President," I said,

giving him the book, "but in the meantime my general will be put under arrest for disobedience, and the mischief will be done."

"That's so," he replied. "Here, give me a pencil," and tearing off a corner of the paper General Schenck had sent him, he wrote:

"All proceedings before the court convened to try General Milroy are suspended until further orders. A. LINCOLN."

The next morning I clanked into the court-room with my triangular order, and had the grim satisfaction of seeing the owls in epaulettes file out, never to be called together again.

With all his awkwardness of manner, and utter disregard of social conventionalities that seemed to invite familiarity, there was something about Abraham Lincoln that enforced respect. No man presumed on the apparent invitation to be other than respectful. I was told at Springfield that this accompanied him through life. Among his rough associates, when young, he was leader, looked up to and obeyed, because they felt of his muscle and his readiness in its use. Among his companions at the bar it was attributed to his ready wit which kept his duller associates at a distance. The fact was, however, that this power came from a sense of reserve force of intellectual ability that no one took account of, save in its results. Through one of those freaks of nature that produce a Shakspeare at long intervals, a giant had been born to the poor whites of Kentucky, and the sense of superiority possessed

President Lincoln at all times. Unobtruding, and even unassuming, as he was, he was not modest in his assertion, and he as quietly directed Seward in shaping our delicate and difficult foreign policy as he controlled Chase in the Treasury and Edwin M. Stanton in the War Department. These men, great as they were, felt their inferiority to their master, and while all three were eaten into, and weakened by, anxiety, he ate and slept and jested as if his brain and will did not carry the fate of an empire.

I never saw him angry but once, and I had no wish to see a second exhibition of his wrath. We were in command of what was called the Middle Department, with headquarters at Baltimore. General Schenck, with the intense loyalty which distinguished that eminent soldier, shifted the military sympathy from the aristocracy of Maryland to the Union men, and made the eloquent Henry Winter Davis and the well-known jurist Judge Bond our associates and advisers. These gentlemen could not understand why, having such entire command of Maryland, the Government did not make it a free State, and so, taking the property from the disloyal, render them weak and harmless, and bring the border of free States to the capital of the Union. The fortifications about Baltimore, used heretofore to threaten that city, now under the influence of Davis, Bond, Wallace, and others, had their guns turned outward for the protection of the place, and it seemed only necessary to inspire the negroes with faith in us as liberators to

perfect the work. The first intimation I received that this policy of freeing Maryland was distasteful to the Administration came from Secretary Stanton. I had told him what we thought, and what we hoped to accomplish. I noticed an amused expression on the face of the War Secretary, and when I ended, he said dryly:

"You and Schenck had better attend to your own business."

I asked him what he meant by "our business." He said, "Obeying orders, that's all."

Not long after this talk with Mr. Stanton, the gallant General William Birney, son of the eminent James G. Birney, came into Maryland to recruit for a negro brigade, then first authorized. I directed Birney to recruit slaves only. He said he would be glad to do so, but wanted authority in writing from General Schenck. I tried my general, and he refused, saying that such authority could come only from the War Department, as Birney was acting directly under its instructions. I could not move him, and knowing that he had a leave of absence for a few days, to transact some business at Boston, I waited patiently until he was fairly off, and then issued the order to General Birney. The general took an idle Government steamer, and left for the part of Maryland where the slaves did most abound. Birney was scarcely out of sight before I awakened to the opposition I had excited. The Hon. Reverdy Johnson appeared at headquarters, heading a delega-

tion of solid citizens, who wanted the Union and slavery saved one and inseparable. I gave them scant comfort, and they left for Washington. That afternoon came a telegram from the War Department, asking who was in command at Baltimore. I responded that General Schenck being absent for a few days only had left affairs in control of his Chief of Staff. Then came a curt summons, ordering me to appear at the War Department. I obeyed, arriving in the evening at the old, sombre building. Being informed that the Secretary was at the Executive Mansion, I repaired there, sent in my card, and was at once shown into the presence, not of Mr. Stanton, but of the President. I do not care to recall the words of Mr. Lincoln. I wrote them out that night, for I was threatened a shameful dismissal from the service, and I intended appealing to the public. They were exceedingly severe, for the President was in a rage. I was not allowed a word in my own defence, and was only permitted to say that I would countermand my order as well as I could. I was saved cashiering through the interference of Stanton and Chase, and the further fact that a row over such a transaction at that time would have been extremely awkward.

My one act made Maryland a free State. Word went out and spread like wildfire that "Mr. Linkum was a callin' on de slaves to fight foh freedum," and the hoe-handle was dropped, never again to be taken up by unrequited toil. The poor creatures poured

into Baltimore with their families, on foot, on horseback, in old wagons, and even on sleds stolen from their masters. The late masters became clamorous for compensation, and Mr. Lincoln ordered a commission to assess damages. Secretary Stanton put in a proviso that those cases only should be considered wherein the claimant could take the iron-bound oath of allegiance. Of course no slaves were paid for.

The President never forgave me. Subsequently, when General Schenck resigned command to take his seat in Congress, the Union men of Maryland and Delaware, headed by Judge Bond, waited on the President with a request that I be promoted to brigadier-general, and put in command of the Middle Department. Mr. Lincoln heard them patiently, and then refused, saying:

"Schenck and Piatt are good fellows, and if there were any rotten apples in the barrel they'd be sure to hook 'em out. But they run their machine on too high a level for me. They never could understand that I was boss."

Edwin M. Stanton told me, after he had left the War Department, that when he sent a list of officers to the President, my name included, as worthy of promotion, Lincoln would quietly draw his pen through my name. I do not blame him. His great, thoughtful brain saw at the time what has taken us years to discover and appreciate. He understood the people he held to a death struggle in behalf of the great Republic, and knew that, while the masses

would fight to the bitter end in behalf of the Union, they would not kill their own brothers, and spread mourning over the entire land, in behalf of the negro. He, therefore, kept the cause of the Union to the front, and wrote to Horace Greeley the memorable words: "If to preserve the Union it is necessary to destroy slavery, slavery will be destroyed; and if to preserve the Union slavery is to be maintained, slavery will be maintained." He well knew that the North was not fighting to liberate slaves, nor the South to preserve slavery. The people of the slave States plunged into a bloody war to build a Southern empire of their own, and the people of the North fought to preserve the Government of the fathers on all the land the fathers left us. In that awful conflict, slavery went to pieces.

We are quick to forget the facts, and slow to recognize the truths that knock from under us our pretentious claims to a high philanthropy. As I have said, Abolitionism was not only unpopular when the war broke out, but it was detested. The minority that elected Mr. Lincoln had fallen heir to the Whig votes of the North, and while pledging itself, in platforms and speeches, to a solemn resolve to keep slavery under the Constitution in the States, restricted its anti-slavery purpose to the prevention of its spread into the Territories. I remember when the Hutchinsons were driven from the camps of the Potomac Army by the soldiers for singing their abolition songs, and I remember well that for nearly two years

of our service as soldiers we were engaged in returning slaves to their masters, when the poor creatures sought shelter in our lines.

President Lincoln's patriotism and wisdom rose above impulse, or his positive temperament and intellect kept him free of mere sentiment. Looking back now at this grand man, and the grave situation at the time, I am ashamed of my act of insubordination, and although it freed Maryland, it now lowers me in my own estimation. Had the President carried his threat of punishment into execution it would have been just.

The popular mind is slow of study, and I fear it will be long ere it learns that, while an eminent man wins our admiration through his great qualities, he can hold our love only by his human weaknesses, that make him one of ourselves. We are told that, with the multitude, nothing is so successful as success, yet there is often more heroism in failure than in triumph. The one is frequently the result of accident, while the other holds in itself all that endears the martyr to the human heart. The unfortunate Hector is, after all, the hero of the Iliad, and not the invulnerable Achilles, and by our popular process of eliminating all human weakness from our great men we weaken, and, in a measure, destroy their immortality, for we destroy them. As we accept the sad, rugged, homely face, and love it for what it is, we should accept it as it was, the grandest figure looming up in our history as a Nation. Washington

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EDWIN M. STANTON.

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laugh so hearty and contagious that it became characteristic. He was not only a hard student in the line of his profession, but had a taste for light literature that made his conversation extremely attractive.

The truth is, Stanton's imagination was through life the larger and most potent quality of his mind, and from first to last he lived in a world so tinctured by it, that his thoughts and acts were mysteries to the commonplace, matter-of-fact minds about him. He shared this peculiarity with William H. Seward, and the two made up a part of President Lincoln's Cabinet quite distinctive from the other half composed of Lincoln himself and Salmon P. Chase. The President and his Secretary of the Treasury, while dissimilar in many respects, were one in the way they regarded what the world is pleased to call facts. A dollar, for example, to Mr. Chase was an unit of value, as seen by a banker. In the eyes of Stanton it represented a hard day's labor, and he saw back of it the bread-winner, and all that depends on that word. A battle to the President was a killing and wounding of a certain number of men, and the consequences, to be counted, like a sum in arithmetic. To Stanton or Seward it told of forming empire, for or againt his cause, and each felt that he had a hand in making history, that would go to record in a government on which rested the happiness and prosperity of untold millions.

Working from such widely separated planes, it is

singular how well they worked together. The truth is, however, that human events are more apt to be distorted when seen without this poetic atmosphere than when bereft of its proportionizing qualities, if I may coin a word to express my meaning. The Gradgrinds of life are half blind, and altogether stupid, from living in a horizon narrowed to a humanity of Gradgrinds. Stanton was impressed with this belief. In the first years of our intimacy, when to both of us it was a luxury to be alive, he told me of a book he was writing in the odd intervals he snatched from less agreeable studies, on the "Poetry of the Bible."

"I want to call attention to the fact," he was wont to say, in his earnest manner, "that God, in all his communications with man, clothed his language in the highest imagery. All light, and all color, that make life beautiful are the affair of a little nerve God has endowed us with to enjoy his precious gifts that after all live only in our brain. This principle, I maintain, runs through all, and the highest religion, if not the only religion, is in a true appreciation of God's works. Thus we work our way through Nature up to Nature's God."

I do not know what became of the work thus nobly planned. I imagine it was never completed, for Stanton had none of the qualities of an author. With all his poetic temperament and high imaginative quality, he was a man of action more than of thought, and long before his dreamed-of book, on the

"Poetry of God," was finished, he found himself plunged into the arena of active life, where he moulded great events, leaving to others their record.

It seems strange to look back and contrast the Stanton of that early day with the hard, bronze, historic figure of a War Minister, whose great brain conceived, and iron hand guided, the terrible conflict that ended in a rebuilding of the great Republic.

Groups of men are busy, with much noise, in building each a monument to some one savior of the country. This is the faded and threadbare superstition of a barbarous past, when the heavy-boned and hard-muscled giant of a leader led his brutal fighters on to victory, long before the qualities of mind were recognized that made the delicate Cæsar and the little Napoleon masters of the world. In the hurry of human events that marks our modern wars, mere fighting qualities, even of the best, have little to do in bringing about great results. While campaigns are necessary, the resources that make campaigns possible are of more importance, and the men of the departments who sanction plans, select leaders, and furnish the means are the real heads that make or mar the heroes, and are to be awarded the honor of success or the blame of failure.

The strangest part, however, as I have said in writing these lines, is to look back and contrast the Stanton of my earlier knowledge with the Stanton of later days. I cannot divest myself of the feeling that I am considering two widely dissimilar men. I

of our service as soldiers we were engaged in returning slaves to their masters, when the poor creatures sought shelter in our lines.

President Lincoln's patriotism and wisdom rose above impulse, or his positive temperament and intellect kept him free of mere sentiment. Looking back now at this grand man, and the grave situation at the time, I am ashamed of my act of insubordination, and although it freed Maryland, it now lowers me in my own estimation. Had the President carried his threat of punishment into execution it would have been just.

The popular mind is slow of study, and I fear it will be long ere it learns that, while an eminent man wins our admiration through his great qualities, he can hold our love only by his human weaknesses, that make him one of ourselves. We are told that, with the multitude, nothing is so successful as success, yet there is often more heroism in failure than in triumph. The one is frequently the result of accident, while the other holds in itself all that endears the martyr to the human heart. The unfortunate Hector is, after all, the hero of the Iliad, and not the invulnerable Achilles, and by our popular process of eliminating all human weakness from our great men we weaken, and, in a measure, destroy their immortality, for we destroy them. As we accept the sad, rugged, homely face, and love it for what it is, we should accept it as it was, the grandest figure looming up in our history as a Nation. Washington

taught the world to know us, Lincoln taught us to know ourselves. The first won for us our independence, the last wrought out our manhood and self-respect.

United States. I will force this man McClellan to fight or throw up; and last, but not least, I will pick Lorenzo Thomas up with a pair of tongs and drop him from the nearest window."

Strange as it is, this last and apparently easiest task was the one he did not accomplish. Lorenzo defied him, and, as Sumner wrote Stanton, "stuck" to the last.

To appreciate the change wrought in the appointment of Mr. Stanton, one has to understand the condition of the Government at the time the Hon. Simon Cameron was retired. The war that so unexpectedly broke upon us—so unexpectedly that the Government itself could not believe in its existence until the roar of Confederate artillery rung in its ears, found a people at the North not only unprepared, but in profound ignorance of all that was necessary to carry on an armed conflict. All the wars that went to make up our history, as wars are wont to do, had been fought out in skirmishes that left the Government and the body of the people unenlightened as to the necessities of a great conflict, such as the rest of the world is taught and trained through experience to understand.

The volunteers, accepted from the States, elected their officers, and were, in consequence, constituents instead of privates, and these officers studied, overnight, all they attempted to practise the next day; and while the awkward drill went on, of discipline, the soul and body of an army, there was none.

EDWIN M. STANTON.

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ham Lincoln, ignorant of all that pertained to the art of war, magnified its importance and difficulties, as one under such circumstances will, and with the modesty so marked in him deferred patiently to those he believed better informed.

When Mr. Stanton told us that he would make Abraham Lincoln President, he did not mean that he would restore the Union, but that he would relegate the young Napoleon to his subordinate position, that of being commander. The indifference, not to say arrogance, of our untried Napoleon, is hard to realize now. With princes and the sons of millionaires upon his staff, he assumed the airs of a dictator, and it was no uncommon circumstance to see both President and Secretary of War waiting in his ante-chamber, for leisure from mighty reviews and petty detail, for an interview with the man who had no campaign to communicate, or, if he had, declined taking the Government into his confidence.

Congress, in its despair, set up this untried dignity in gorgeous uniform, and saw, for nearly a year, a huge army coiled like a sluggish anaconda about the capital, and learned to its dismay that the only orders from headquarters were to "avoid bringing on a conflict," and continued congratulations that "all was quiet on the Potomac." Exasperated beyond endurance, Congress demanded the removal of Simon Cameron as a preliminary step to unhorsing our parade captain.

President Lincoln, nothing loath, complied with

this, and, I have reason to believe, hesitated, for some days, between the appointment of the Hon. Joseph Holt and Edwin M. Stanton. Strange to say, the doubt was solved by the interference of General McClellan. He preferred the man who, in the end, made life a burden to the young Napoleon, and his retirement a necessity.

"Now, gentlemen," said Secretary Stanton to the officers assembled at his first reception, "we will, if you please, have some fighting. It is my business to furnish the means, it is yours to use them. I leave the fighting to you, but the fighting we must have."

The change wrought by him, in his new capacity, was magical. Disorder and dishonesty disappeared together. The one hid itself in holes, to be hunted out and punished with a certainty that struck terror into the souls of the thieves; while the other was driven out never to appear again. Huge armies began to move, the great arteries of supply to throb with men and material. The anaconda uncoiled its folds, and stretching out, drove the Confederate flag and artillery from Munson's Hill. The roar of deadly conflict grew remote, and Richmond, in lieu of Washington, was threatened with capture. The stillness about the War Department grew ominous. Instead of quarrelling contractors and clattering epauletted officials, the telegraph ticked out its fateful information, deadly orders, reports of great battles, and, I am pained to write, shameful dis-

asters which startled the land. The people felt the master hand, and waited in breathless anxiety for the results, in victory or defeat. Men about the capital saw through the dead hours of the night the lights gleam from the windows where the masterful Secretary held, without rest, the trembling fate of the great Republic in firm hands under an iron will.

Few only of us knew of the strain put upon one man in this hour of deadly trial. Edwin M. Stanton had been, of late years, subject to a determination of blood to the brain, and had been warned by his capable physician, that, unless he found entire quiet in abstinence from all excitement, he might die at any moment. Yet notwithstanding these warnings, he threw himself into the great work, fully aware of the danger before him, while Death sat at his board, slept in his bed, and through the long watches of those fearful nights the grim phantom glared upon him, ready at any moment to strike. It was, after all, only a furlough he received from the enemy. God seemed to ordain that he should be spared until his mighty task was ended, and then the pale messenger accompanied him home, tenderly to inscribe upon his monument—"To this man, more than to any other, save one, the great Republic owes its life."

This disorder, added to his mental strain, overwhelmed the great Secretary's nervous system, and not only deepened the gloomy spells to which he was addicted, but made him so irritable and impatient

that official business with subordinates got to be insult. He was approached by all about him in fear and trembling. And the same ugliness seemed to be contagious. The officer coming from his presence, wounded to the quick, gave to others under him the same treatment.

I remember, one morning, trying to gain admittance to the Department in advance of the hour at which the place was open to the world. A sentry arrested my entrance at the door. In vain I pleaded an engagement with the Secretary, and asked for a corporal or sergeant to carry in my card. The stupid fellow gave me no comfort. While parleying with him, Mr. Seward came up, and the guard dropped his musket brusquely across the way of the Secretary of State. Before our great diplomat could make himself known, I said:

"This is the Secretary of State, my man, and you had better be polite."

The guard brought his musket instantly to a present, and Mr. Seward passed in.

"I say, Mr. Secretary," I cried to him, "as I got you admitted, common politeness dictates that you return the favor."

"Young man," responded the Secretary, looking over his shoulder, "the politeness of this Department is not common," and passed on.

A subordinate, to deal comfortably with the War Secretary, had to be a mere cipher, so dictatorial and despotic was he. I remember, when summoned

before him as Judge Advocate of the commission called to investigate the conduct of General Don Carlos Buell in Tennessee, I ventured to say:

"This is all very well, Mr. Secretary, but I'd like to know where you find a law to sanction such a court as this."

"My noble captain," replied the Secretary, his short upper lip slightly curling, and with the gleam of his white teeth and dark eyes making an expression anything but comfortable, "you are commissioned to obey orders, and not to study law, for it is rather late in life for you to begin that. When I need a legal adviser it is not likely I will call on Judge Piatt. If I am to be met here with the quibble of a county-court lawyer I will find some other officer."

The sarcasm stung, for I had been placed on the bench at the age of twenty-five, as Salmon P. Chase said, that I might have an opportunity to learn something of my profession. However, I hid the hurt, and said:

"All right; but I would suggest that this is no ordinary inquiry, and a court should be made up of the ablest officers."

"That is true," responded the Secretary. "You go to the list of officers not on duty, and I will appoint from that."

I did as directed, and the next day sought the Secretary with the list of officers in my hand. I met him on the street going to his office, that had been

removed to Winder's Building to enable the Government to enlarge the old structure. I turned and walked with him, telling him what I had done. He was in a terrible mood, and neither looked at nor spoke to me. At the door of his office the messenger threw it open, and the Secretary, stalking in, banged it into my face. This wooden insult sent a flush to my face. Turning, I saw General Frémont, who had witnessed the affront, and while talking to this remarkable man, the messenger came from the Secretary's room and, after looking about in a scared manner, asked me if I was "Captain Piety."

"All but the piety," I replied.

"Well, I guess you're the man," he said. "The Secretary wants you."

I went in. Stanton was seated alone at the end of his table. Looking up, he exclaimed:

"Donn, what in the —— do you want?"

"Nothing, sir; not even civil treatment. You directed me to make out a list of officers to compose the Buell court. I have done so, and only came to report the names."

"Take them to Halleck; that is his business," roared the Secretary. "I can't run the War Department, let alone trying to run Halleck. Go to him."

"Mr. Secretary," I said quietly, "I don't mind being jumped on by you any more than if it were my elder brother, but I won't be insulted by General Halleck, as you know I will be if I go as you direct."

"Insulted?" he exclaimed, angrily. "I'll see to that. "Here, take him this," and he hastily wrote a note.

I did as ordered. I appeared before the great Art of War, whose appearance reminded me of two lines in an old ballad which says:

> "His head being larger than common
> O'erbalanced the rest of his fat."

He read the note I handed him, then, tearing it in two, dropped it in the waste-basket, saying, with all the sarcasm his dull face was capable of:

"What is your address, captain?"

I gave it to him, and then, rising from his chair, he bowed mockingly, and added, "When I need your assistance, I shall certainly send for you, *captain.*" The sarcasm of this was so well done that it raised the dull, epauletted creature in my estimation far above what his stupid book had done. I retired as gracefully as I could, and reported the affair to Stanton.

"Damn his insolence! Why didn't you pull his nose?"

"Because the insult was directed at you," I answered. "I was only the poor devil of a captain assigned to the duty of carrying it. I wish to God I was out of this."

My perplexity amused the Secretary. He burst into a laugh, and said, "Oh, never mind Halleck; he can't insult any one. Take the court he gives

you, and do the best you can," and, seeing that I was deeply hurt, he put his arm about my shoulders, in his old caressing way, and added, "Don't mind me, we are both hasty. This is important business I give you, and I know I can trust you."

I did my best, and, while on the subject, may as well give the end. The records of that tedious court, so-called, were voluminous. I conveyed them, as duly bound, to the War Department. Mr. Stanton examined me at length as to what had been proven, and I saw an expression very like heat lightning flash over his face when I told him that a certain pet of his had suffered severely. After the death of the Secretary it was discovered that the entire record had disappeared.

I have my own opinion as to the cause of that disappearance, but it is only an opinion, and I do not care to state it. Fortunately or unfortunately, the accomplished stenographer employed by the commission, Benn Pittman, had yet the original short-hand notes, and restored the awful volume of unmitigated rot.

History grows more difficult as the world goes on. The art of printing, that is regarded as an aid, is its chief hindrance; for history is putting to record popular belief. The daily journals photograph, through their instantaneous process, these beliefs as facts; and, while this process seems to throw a piercing glare on all events, it only confuses the mind of the impartial investigator. It is an electric light that

deepens the shadows while it distorts all that it shines upon. The old style of genius patiently delving among time-stained documents and half-forgotten facts, in search of the truth, was more satisfactory; for it made events, if not clear, at least consistent, and, while monsters of goodness and wickedness were created, the mass of facts, as recorded, harmonized with each other. We may not have got a true story, but we did receive a lesson that refined and elevated its pupils.

Through this process, the conduct and character of our great War Secretary suffer unjustly. The late Senator Wilson, of Massachusetts, and the late Jeremiah S. Black, of Pennsylvania, had a fierce controversy over Stanton's conduct while a member of President Buchanan's Cabinet. The one maintained that if the other was correct in what he asserted, Stanton was a monster of duplicity and ingratitude.

Both were wrong, and, to a certain extent, both were right. Senator Wilson was a man all sentiment and of little information, while Judge Black squared all creation on certain principles, and was as narrow in his bigotry as Wilson in his beliefs. Both failed to take into account the impulsiveness of the Secretary, whose feelings often ran away with his better judgment. He was bound, by his position in Buchanan's Cabinet, to sustain his chief in his charming proposition which asserted that, while a State could not secede from the Union, the Government could not restrain such secession by force. Stanton

saw the absurdity of an attempt to hold the turbulent Union by the rotten ground-rail of a Virginia abstraction, but he looked in wrath that ended in sickening disgust at the noisy Abolitionists, who, through their hatred of the master, would scuttle and sink the ship of state. Between these conflicting feelings he gave open expression to his impatience, that Wilson seized on as information, and, after Stanton's death, claimed as evidence of sympathy.

The truth is the charge against Stanton of betraying the secrets of Buchanan's Cabinet made by implication in the Black-Wilson controversy, and since brought forward directly on the floor of Congress, is, in the light of facts since unveiled, not only untenable, but grotesquely absurd. In the first place the Cabinet had no secrets to divulge, and in the second place, if such existed their betrayal could have been made only to the Confederates. We may wade through the solemn discussions of that helplessly dignified body to find only propositions looking to avoiding the embarrassments of the situation. All that was said and done could have been, and, indeed, was published to the world. But we must remember that in the issue then pressing an imbecile administration for an immediate solution the Confederates were the foes, and the Republican party the ally of the Government. Secretary Stanton's offence was that he conferred with friends and allies. How to save the Union was the problem, and Stanton sought counsel with the incoming administration that was

more deeply interested in the grave question than the one about to expire. But, cries the enemy, he did this secretly. Of course he did. To understand this to the credit of the Secretary, we have to remember that party spirit was more violent and unreasoning then than at any time in the history of the Republic.

The political structure formed by the fathers was intended in two of its branches, the judicial and executive, to be colorless so far as politics are concerned. The Constitution so carefully framed was meant to be a protection to the minority. But this Government on paper developed in practice into a rule of party in which the minority is possessed of no right that the majority is bound to respect. The party in power has come to be not only a despotism of numbers but the Government itself, and all opposition to it assumes the rank flavor of treason. It is difficult at this day to realize the intolerant and bigoted feeling and conduct of the Democracy in power at the time the South seceded and President Buchanan was called on to vacate his position in favor of a minority President, a vulgar rail-splitter from the wilds of Illinois. Up to that time the mere expression of opinion in favor of free-soil was met by violence that threatened death. Members of Congress went to their seats armed with revolvers, and the Democratic side courted attack. Sumner had been stricken down in his place in the Senate, and a reign of terror had been inaugurated such as

had been before unknown in the history of our country. Mr. Stanton had sense enough to know that all this violence only hastened on what it had been created to prevent, and he had sufficient prudence not to peril his own influence by defying it. While his life-long Democracy revolted against the doctrines of the incoming party, he recognized the fact that it was incoming, and, appreciating the eminent men who were put to the front, he sought to counsel with them. He could not betray the administration of which he made a part, for it possessed, as I have said, nothing the imparting a knowledge of which would constitute a betrayal. His sin, in the eyes of his associate, Jeremiah S. Black, at that date, and since in those of the Hon. Joseph Wheeler, was that he had any intercourse with Abolitionists. He took them into the confidence of the outgoing administration when both parties were supposed to be acting, if not together, at least in opposition to the common enemy. As I have said, we must remember that this occurred at a time when party spirit was resolving itself into an armed conflict, and that while President Buchanan deplored secession he despised its Republican opponents, and those who see so much to condemn in Mr. Stanton's secret conference, find no blame for a President who not only failed to secure his successor safe entry to the Capital, but openly expressed his contempt by permitting the President-elect to go from a hotel unaccompanied to the Capitol, to take

the oath of office. The poor old politician little dreamed that he then lost an opportunity of shedding a grace on himself by introducing to the people the man so good and so great that even this formal official recognition would have, in a measure, reflected a better light on the dying administration,

> That had the sense to see the coming wrong
> But not the heart to fight.

This is all there is left of the shadow that bitter but feeble enemies seek to cast upon the tomb of the great War Secretary.

I cannot believe that a man of Stanton's force of character and fixed opinions was suddenly converted from a pro-slavery Democrat to an Abolitionist. He was not the man to be stricken down in his sin, and rise in his righteousness, from one blow. It is my opinion that he took the place tendered him by President Lincoln precisely as he would have accepted a retainer from a client in an important case. He saw from the beginning that the issue was to be fought out to the bitter end. He found no difficulty in making the case his own. It was his habit; and, in this instance, it came easy; for, while he loathed the anti-slavery organization, he loved the Union with the strongest pulsations of a heart that had in it truer guidance than the loftiest leader of the Abolitionists had in the light of his brain.

In the same way, General McClellan hurries into print to charge Edwin M. Stanton with treachery to the man who claims to have made the Secretary.

This is natural, and of easy solution. When the "Young Napoleon" graciously consented to the selection of Stanton as Secretary of War, he did so under the impression that he was to have the same sort of humble supporter Simon Cameron had been. He awakened to the fact that it was one thing to have a sympathizing friend in a brother Democrat, giving him what lawyers call street opinions on supposable cases, and quite another to have the same man made master, with the responsibility of an empire thrown upon his shoulders.

Stanton assumed the powers of Secretary with the solemn resolve to execute its duties to the best of his ability, without fear, affection or favor. He failed in many instances, as I shall show, but not in respect to McClellan. His first important move grew out of the very intimacy that is made the foundation of this charge. Stanton saw, as did Lincoln, Seward, and Chase, that only half the enemy was under arms at their front; that the other half, far more deadly, was coiled in silence at their rear.

Lincoln was a minority President. The unknown rail-splitter of Illinois had no hold on the affections of the people he presided over. He told us once that he felt like a surveyor in the wild woods of the West, who, while looking for a corner, kept an eye over his shoulder for an Indian. The late Whigs and immediate Free-soilers voting against the extension of slavery, more from the necessity of having some sort of a platform on which to rally than opposition to

slavery, accepted without enthusiasm the President a minority had elected; while the Democrats at the North felt, as deeply as Stanton himself, nothing but hatred and contempt for the cause.

The firing on our flag at Sumter, that so aroused the war spirit at the North, disconcerted and discouraged the democratic sentiment at the same North, but did not kill it. It was observed, and it must be remembered, that, as the thousands wheeled into line and marched to the front, it was under cries of "Save the Union," and not to free the negro. They went out to punish and put down the miscreants who had dragged in the dust the flag of our fathers, and they gave the Abolitionists the cold shoulder for being, as they believed, the real cause of all this turmoil. How long this war spirit would last was the question. Lincoln believed it would continue with our success in the field. He and his Cabinet suddenly awakened to quite another fact, and that was that, while a victory seemed to arouse the rebel spirit at the North, and a demand was heard to cease fighting and negotiate with the wrong-doers for peace, a shameful defeat, that sent mourning through the households of the patriotic, seemed to arouse a spirit that not only silenced open discontent, but sent thousands on thousands of brave fellows to the field to retrieve the disaster.

It was impossible to tell how long this state of affairs would continue. Our great statesmen in control at Washington well knew that this rebellious

discontent grew on delay. Hence Stanton's demand, "We will have some fighting, gentlemen."

He awakened to another startling fact, and that was that this spirit of distrust in the Government had crept into the army. West Point, that teaches everything but patriotism and the art of war, had been prolific of pro-slavery Democrats. Taught blind obedience to the powers that be as the essence of soldiership, and having known no other power than a pro-slavery Government, the West Pointers divided at the sound of the first gun, and while one-half, acknowledging allegiance only to their States, went South, the other half, recognizing their obligations to the National Government, remained faithful, and yet, with few exceptions, secretly despising the rule of Abolitionists. This feeling arose from the additional fact that West Point is more of a social feature than a military school, and as reformers are not fashionable, seldom, if ever, even respectable, the cadet had a horror of the howling Abolitionist.

These are unpleasant things to say now, but I am giving Stanton's views at the time, and the views shared by his eminent associates. We look back, and wonder at the cold neglect awarded George H. Thomas, the most brilliant and successful soldier of the war, but Lincoln had been taught to distrust a West Point Democrat, and that distrust was deepened by Thomas' Virginia birth.

"This man has no heart in the cause," said Stanton of McClellan, "he is fighting for a boundary if

he fights at all; our great difficulty is to make him fight at all."

I have not the space here to follow the "Young Napoleon" through his fearful disasters on the James. Stanton maintained to the last hour of his life that these defeats came as much from disloyalty as incapacity. I differ from him. The same lack of capacity that brought defeat saved us from any well-defined project of treachery. The man who shrank from a move on Richmond, after Malvern Hill, had not in him the stuff to make a Catiline.

I have nothing to do with the war, save so far as the facts go to disprove the charges now made against the dead Secretary. Stanton told me after he left the War Department to die, that "all the time the huge army lay coiled about Washington, a distrust of the Government, as a nest of vicious Abolitionists, was insidiously cultivated among the men; and, after the terrible defeats before Richmond, when distress from sickness and disaster depressed the army, the men were taught to believe that the Government had abandoned them to their cruel fate. This was so marked," continued the Secretary, speaking in gasps, "that when Lincoln visited the camps a fear was felt at headquarters that he would be insulted, and orders were issued to cheer the President when he appeared." Instead of holding to all that we had gained through such terrible loss of blood and money, the entire army had to be returned to the fortifications of Washington, before Lincoln dared

put another general in command. McClellan's restoration was a mistake, but it originated in the same fact. Lincoln said: "This man may not be the best to continue as our general, but he has the confidence of the men, and is the only one able to reorganize our forces after these defeats. We must bear with him awhile longer."

I have not space to treat of this McClellan affair further than is necessary to illustrate the character of Secretary Stanton. If the democratic general had his plan of a campaign, he was as remarkable for keeping it to himself as he was cautious in putting it in operation. Nothing but repeated orders could force him to move, and the only interference he could complain of was in the directing that Washington should not be uncovered.

The true story of the late war has not been told. It probably never will be told. It is not flattering to our people, and, as I have said, unpalatable truths seldom find their way into history. All books, so far, are confined to the armed conflict, which was but one-third of the war the administration was called on to prosecute. I have referred to the disloyal feeling that fairly honeycombed with treason the Northern States. There was another third of the conflict, that concerned the power at Washington, that the able Seward, under Lincoln, managed with eminent ability, and that was the danger from foreign interferenee. Had the war powers of Europe combined, as they were disposed to do, in a recogni-

tion of the Confederacy, I should now be writing this under the Northern Republic of America. This fear was never made prominent, for it was not policy to have it known; but it hung on the horizon like a heavy cloud, with muttering thunder, that Lincoln and his Cabinet were forced to see and hear.

Now, our capital was in the country of the enemy. Sandwiched between Virginia and Maryland, with treason simmering in the one and at a boil in the other, it was in continual peril. To lose that capital at any time was to fetch on from Europe, not only recognition, but armed interference. The clear, capable brain of Seward saw this, and hence the order from the Secretary of War that kept an army well in hand, not so much to repel the attacks of an organized force, as to keep in subjection a people whose stones and clubs would have been as much to the purpose as Lee's armed brigades of disciplined men.

I am pained to write, striving to do so with truth, that against other charges of injustice on the part of the great Secretary I can make no defence. With all his eminent ability, with all his earnest, honest desire to do his duty to the Government he served, he was, without exception, more subject to personal likes and dislikes, more vindictive in his gratification of the last, than any man ever called to public station. Nothing but his wonderful ability and great force of character saved him and his cause from utter wreck in this direction. Not only so, but it seemed to me that both Stanton and Seward were

drunk with the lust of power. They fairly rioted in its enjoyment. While Lincoln and Chase were as pure and simple in this as children, with no such morbid desire to gratify, with no personal friends to favor, and no enemies to punish, Stanton and Seward not only revelled in despotic authority, but Stanton used the fearful power of the Government to crush those he hated, while he sought, through the same means, to elevate those he loved. His official business became a personal affair, and the enemies he sought to destroy were, with some exceptions, in his estimation the foes of the Government.

Of the many instances memory brings to mind, the most cruel—one may indeed write infamous—was the treatment of General Rosecrans. William S. Rosecrans, a brave, patriotic soldier, with brilliant qualities as a commander, and many striking defects, had wounded Stanton in a way never to be forgotten or forgiven.

"Old Rosy," as his soldiers affectionately called him, and, in so doing, gave the man in two words, did not know one man from another. In regard to character he was color-blind, and, of course, did not recognize a great man when he saw him—certainly not, unless under epaulettes manufactured at West Point. He regarded Stanton as a clerk to the President, and the President as an impertinent interference in the management of the great war, which interference he regretted that the Constitution prevented removing.

I have said he had brilliant qualities as a general in command. He could plan a campaign and fight a battle equal to any officer in the United States. But in the selection of his subordinates he could not distinguish George H. Thomas from Alexander McDowel McCook, and in receiving instructions or advice from his superiors, he could not see that they were apt to be wiser than he, from their having escaped what he was pleased to call a military education. In the personal intercourse first had between the Secretary and the soldier occurred a mutual misunderstanding of each other that continued to the end. Nature has given to all its creatures an instinctive knowledge of their enemies. This enmity really had its origin in ignorance, but it is doubtful whether any amount of information would have corrected the difference. Rosecrans saw before him, as I have said, a mere clerk, and instead of sweeping the floor with his new plumes, with bated breath and humble attention, as other generals were wont to do, he not only held his perpendicular with the martial bearing becoming the sashed and gold-embroidered soldier, but with a soldier's indifference to the views of a clerk and civilian on matters of war. Of course, the Secretary resented such extraordinary conduct, and could see no good in the shallow brigadier.

A vacancy of a major-generalship in the regular service occurring, some time after Stanton assumed the duties of Secretary, he issued a circular to all

the generals open to such promotion, offering the position to the one achieving the first victory.

The Secretary did not entertain the highest opinion of his epauletted subordinates, and did not know that he was wounding men who, whatever may be said of their military capacity or patriotism, had, through training and association, a nice sense of honor. All of these felt what Rosecrans alone had boldness enough to resent. Seizing his pen, always as fatal to himself as his sword to the enemy, he worded a rough rebuke that went home to the heart of the author of the circular. After that this brave man and efficient officer had, first, neglect, and then cruel punishment and abuse from the Secretary.

When the Army of the Cumberland required a new commander, after the failure of General Buell, Chase urged Rosecrans, and Lincoln called him to the place, in spite of Stanton's opposition. The Secretary of War preferred Thomas, not only because he had learned to admire and believe in that greatest of all our generals, but for that he had sworn "Rosy" should never again be officer of his. I speak of what I know, for I had excited Stanton's wrath by urging the selection of Rosecrans, and I remember well the day when he entered the War Department, flushed with anger, for I happened there, and said abruptly to me, "Well, you have your choice of idiots; now look out for frightful disasters."

No army in the field called for the same patient consideration and care as that of the Cumberland.

The success of our campaigning turned on a question of transportation. The enemy, occupying the inner lines of a circle, could, with comparative ease, concentrate on any point selected, while to the geographical difficulties before us were added the dishonesty of our agents furnishing supplies and the wanton improvidence of our men, who, feeling the huge Government at their backs, were, with all their courage and endurance, as improvident as children. We wasted in a day what would have sustained a European army for a month.

We had three armies in the field, and if my reader will turn to the map he will see that, while one operated on the James, the other had the Mississippi. The third, Rosecrans' force, struck through the interior from Louisville, and for six hundred miles over the enemy's territory had to depend on a single line of railroad. Rosecrans had more trouble to keep open this line, and after every victory and successful turn, to accumulate supplies, than he had to whip the enemy. The two armies, right and left of him, moved on with ease, and while their generals were congratulated on their manœuvres, Rosecrans was censured for delay, although at every halt he won a victory and rebuilt his railroad. His objective point was Chattanooga, the Gibraltar of the South. Nature built the impregnable fortifications of the place, while almost impassable mountains stretched their palisades east and west for two hundred miles.

Rosecrans, after delays Stanton could not or would not appreciate, and the people grew impatient over, penetrated these mountains, turned Bragg's flank, and forcing the Confederate to a fight on equal terms, repulsed him and fell back on Chattanooga. He had accomplished his objective point. He had won the apparently impregnable fort, from which our armies operated from that out, and his reward was, to be dismissed under a cloud of lies, in the most insulting and brutal manner. This was so evident, that Thomas, who had won our victory at Chickamauga from the very jaws of defeat, repudiated the call made on him to succeed Rosecrans, and only accepted when forced, after he had put on record his high appreciation of his late commander.

Stanton's impulses have placed his memory in a false position, and I fear that in stating so broadly his enmities I shall add to this erroneous impression. Strong as were his feelings, there was one sentiment that overrode and controlled all others, and that was his patriotism. The cases of Milroy and Rosecrans really make exceptions to his general conduct. When, through his own choice or that of the President, he gave a general command, he did all in his power to make that command a success. He was really attached, personally, to McClellan until he discovered that officer's incapacity, and he had, on the other hand, a dislike for Grant; yet to both he gave his best endeavors and all the resources of his department.

That there was feeling between Stanton and Grant can be learned from Grant's memoirs, in which that general repays Stanton's efforts in his behalf by striving to put the Secretary to record as an imbecile.

It is not generally known how this personal difference came about. The history of Grant's military career exhibits to the ordinary reader the fact that the great Secretary not only gave the General unlimited command, but hurried to his support all the resources of the Government. The fact is, however, that Stanton, in common with his eminent associates, had a contempt for the mere military man. This, of course, is not shared by the general public. Through all ages the man-killer has been the hero in the popular mind. The false yet fascinating glamour of war blinds the masses to the fact that a mere leader of men is such through an absence of the higher intellectual qualities. His self-reliance that makes him eminent is the result of ignorance. The more we know the less we seem to ourselves to know; and while the leader acts with the promptness necessary to success the thoughtful mind hesitates, making obstacles impossibilities. Had Buell, for example, known less he would have been more successful. The common mind takes no note of the fact that when the war came on men totally unknown to the country as great in any respect, not only came to the front, but thrust aside all the statesmen whom the country had loved and followed. Nor do these people see that

when the war ended the continuance of such military men in power proved a nuisance and a burden.

Had Grant died under the shadow of Lee's surrendered sword, before he could have been used by the politicians, few would venture to question a monument, however unjust, that would rise above the shaft dedicated to the memory of Washington. As a politician—and history will record the fact—he did more to destroy our Government through corruption than he did to sustain it with his sword.

Stanton, with his usual frankness, had no hesitation in expressing his contempt for Grant, but he always added, "The man will fight." This contempt came from an event not generally known, but nevertheless a fact. When the Army of the Cumberland was cooped up in Chattanooga, with starvation or surrender staring it in the face, Stanton hurried west to meet Grant at Louisville and consult him as to the best means for relieving our beleaguered forces. The day on which they met was given to these considerations, and the wire between Chattanooga and Louisville trembled with continuous messages. When night came the two men separated with an understanding that after an hour devoted to rest and refreshment, they should meet again and continue their labor. The next morning General Grant was to leave for Chattanooga.

When the time came for the meeting Grant did not appear. Stanton waited impatiently, receiving the telegrams that continued to pour in, and at last sent

for the General. He could not be found. It was suggested that he had gone to the theatre. The Secretary, amazed and disgusted, had the theatres searched without success. At last, long after midnight, the General was found in a place, and under circumstances, not necessary to relate to those who knew the habits of this renowned warrior. Had he been of a sensitive nature he would, under the savage reprimand of the Secretary, have then and there disappeared from history, as his supposed friend, General Sherman, said, on another occasion at Donelson.

A like misunderstanding attends the personal difference between Stanton and Sherman.

It is popularly believed that this personal difference between these two men originated in the usurpation of power indulged in by General Sherman in making terms of surrender with General Johnson. By these terms Sherman coolly undertook to settle all the political issues of the war. He put the President, Congress, and the courts aside, and for the time being arrogated to himself all the powers of the Government.

The President was aroused at this egotistical exhibit of a subordinate, but Stanton, Chase, and Seward were indignant, especially the first named.

The fact is, however, that Stanton's wrath at Sherman antedated this event, and had birth in Sherman's march to the sea. That Sherman's army should further penetrate the South and really cut the

Confederacy in two by destroying the railroads, and the stores, buildings, and machine-shops at Augusta, the great Southern military manufactory and arsenal, and not only sever but hold the lines by which the Confederate Army at Richmond received reinforcements and supplies, but at the same time leave a sufficient force with Thomas to hold the Confederate Army under Hood in check, was the expectation of the War Department at Washington.

Instead of this, Sherman disappeared from the front with nearly his entire force, and, while avoiding all enemies except the Georgia militia, left Thomas with only twenty-two thousand men scattered over half of Tennessee to cope with an army that had come near proving too much for the one hundred thousand veterans Sherman had led against Atlanta.

A panic, which extended to the headquarters before Richmond, seized the Government at Washington. And well it might. The Government learned, to its consternation, that while Sherman had abandoned all that had been gained through such a vast expenditure of blood and treasure, for a holiday march to the sea, the Confederacy contemplated a stroke that was to revive the drooping fortunes of its cause, and justify France in at last interfering from Mexico in the desperate struggle. To this end Hood had been furnished with all the men and means in the power of the Confederate Government to gather on the Tennessee in order to cut Sherman's communications and march to the Ohio. The Gov-

ernment regarded Sherman's march, as he conducted it, as a monstrous blunder until Thomas gave relief by defeating Hood at Nashville. It was a desperate chance, which no other man than George H. Thomas could have made a success.

Lincoln, with a philosophy which accepted as well all that ended well, forgave the blunderer; but Stanton did not; and when Sherman added insult to injury by undertaking the reconstruction of the South, Stanton expressed himself in terms far more forcible than polite.

It matters little how much a man may be warped by the rough usage of the world, or how moulded into another form by contact with adverse circumstances, there yet remains hidden in him the youth that, as the poet tells us, is the father of the man. Stanton's great force of character and impulsive nature became fierce and aggressive, not through lack of kindly feeling on his part, but, as I have said, from disease that overwhelmed his nervous system, and from the strain of the onerous duties so unexpectedly thrust upon him. A man in a high place who devotes himself to a small object and ignores the weightier responsibilities of his position, may retain his composure and improve his health. This was not Stanton. His great patriotic heart felt, as his brain recognized, the difficulties and responsibilities of his place, and, with his eye single to the good of the whole country, he assumed and struggled constantly under the entire weight of his office. In

commenting upon his defects, we have to take into account the trying period of four years during which he acted so important a part. The country he loved with intense earnestness was in the direst peril. Huge armies were enrolled and hastily organized under his immediate direction to do battle for the Government, and almost every hour brought news of shameful disasters and defeats of the brave men he was instrumental in sending to the front. In judging of his impatience and comparative cruelty, and of the many cases of positive injustice, we must take into consideration all these circumstances and surroundings. He worked in the midst of a tremendous tumult, and one man only seemed to rise above the confusion and disorder to a calm consideration, not only of the great struggle going on, but of all the details in which inoffensive men and helpless women were trampled under. That man was Abraham Lincoln. While Stanton grew furious almost to insanity over the failures of his generals that sent desolation and misery to the households all over the land, Lincoln was not only cool and quiet, but found time and patience to help the hurt, and sympathize with the unfortunate who came in contact with him.

We should do Edwin M. Stanton great injustice were we to omit these mitigating circumstances. That he was impatient, tyrannical, and sometimes unjust, we have to admit, but, as I have said, these were defects traceable to his ill-health and to the press of affairs crowded into those four years of

national trial. His heart, under all its rough exterior, would beat kindly when reached by suffering, and in proof of this we have the fact that in all that time it was open to the common soldier. No man from the ranks appeared about the Department with a complaint that he did not receive immediate attention from the great Secretary; and when such attention was obtained, there was no rank, however high, that could exempt the wrong-doer from investigation and punishment. These were not the acts of a demagogue seeking popularity with the commons. Stanton had no ambition beyond the conquest of the South, and felt that he did not know that his life could be extended beyond his term of office in the War Department; and he had, therefore, no other motive than the discharge of his immediate duties.

In illustration of his kind disposition when approached from the ranks, I have the following story from an officer who happened to be present on the occasion to which I refer.

It was during the morning hour when the Secretary's office was open to all comers, and therefore crowded with the usual collection of contractors, officers, Members of Congress, and others having business with the Department. Into this crowd came a young man, scarcely indeed more than a boy, ragged, dirty, and evidently in ill-health. He stole in timidly and stood leaning against the wall near the door as if too feeble to stand alone. The Secretary, whose keen eye seemed to take in all about him,

saw the poor fellow, and brushing aside the officers crowding about him, called the boy to him and said: "Well, my lad, what can I do for you?"

The soldier, without saying a word in reply, drew a letter from his pocket and handed it to the Secretary. The letter was torn open and hastily read, and when read Stanton cried, "Come here, all of you," and as they gathered about him, read the letter aloud, and then holding it up, added, "I would rather be worthy of this letter than have the highest commission in the Army of the United States."

It was an appeal from George H. Thomas in behalf of the bearer, a survivor of the men sent South by Gen. O. M. Mitchell to burn the bridges and destroy the railway communications of the Confederates before the battle of Shiloh. The youth's companions had been caught and hanged, and he had escaped more dead than alive. Reaching the Union lines, nearly a year elapsed before he was able to leave the hospital, and General Thomas urged earnestly that he might be rewarded.

Again turning to the boy, Stanton asked, with considerable emotion in his voice, what he could do for him.

The lad said, "Let me go home. I want to see my mother."

"You shall go home," said the Secretary, "and when you return to the army it shall be as an officer. This is the sort of devotion that is needed in the service."

Edwin M. Stanton left the War Department, not only wrecked in health, but utterly ruined in fortune. The accumulation of an independence accomplished through long years of toil at the bar disappeared during his term of service, and he left the office a poor man. It is the system of our great Republic to develop mediocrity in office, to say nothing of dishonesty, by its economy in the way of compensation for services. When to this we add the uncertain tenure of office, we get at one source of the demoralization felt in our civil service.

Mr. Stanton left few friends in the Administration that his patriotic efforts had made successful. His unfortunate manner had offended the officers of the army, and irritated the politicians; while his honesty had antagonized the element that was to govern the country after the war. President Grant, as we have seen, hated him. He could, therefore, hope for no support for his dependent family from the Government he had done so much to preserve. He made an attempt to resume his practice under circumstances that made a kind-hearted Justice of the Supreme Court go to his sick-room to hear an argument. That Justice found the intellect clear and vigorous as ever, but saw that the hand of death was on the advocate.

A vacancy at last occurring in the Supreme Court, all the prominent Republicans of House and Senate went in a body and demanded of the President the

commission that was reluctantly given. It came only in time to gratify the eyes of a dying man.

Stanton had his defects, but he had no weaknesses. His very sins had a fierce strength in them, that helped on, instead of retarding his work. He could crush a personal enemy under the iron heel of his military power, but the men he favored, such as Hooker, Pope, and Thomas, were eminently fitted for the tasks assigned them.

Stanton's was the master-mind of the war. To his indomitable will and iron nature we owe all that we accomplished in that direction. When he saw, after the battle of Gettysburg, that the Confederacy was sinking from sheer exhaustion, he crowded on men to stamp it out. He knew that Lee was leaving a highway of human bones to mark Grant's road from the Rapidan to Richmond; that we were having more killed than the Confederate generals had in command; he knew that Sherman's march on Atlanta was a succession of bloody defeats, and he said, "He can give five men to their one, and win; these victories to the rebels are disasters they cannot afford." He knew that forty thousand of our poor fellows were dying of exposure and starvation in Confederate prisons, yet when Grant wrote him that to liberate that number of healthy rebels would be the ruin of Sherman, the exchange was stopped. There was no sea of blood, no waste of treasure, to stand in the way of a restored Union and the empire of a continent.

He finished his great work, resigned his commission of office and his life at the same instant, for he staggered from his Department on the arm of Death. The terrible strain that a fierce nature had actually lived on, gave way, and the relaxation meant dissolution. The silver cord did not snap; it unravelled and fell to pieces. He died in the golden glow of his greatness, and was spared that most pitiable of all spectacles, the hero who survives himself. It was a cold, tempestuous night, when this stormy nature sank to its last repose, and the Carnot "who organized victory" surrendered quietly to the victor over all.

As the smoke of battles and the mist of conflicting passions pass away, five grand, stern figures loom up before us, standing strange and solemn as fates raised by destiny to save our Government in its hour of peril. The monument to Lincoln has not yet been built. When it is, the column that holds aloft the form of our greatest man of that trying period should have supporting the base four bronze figures of Chase, Seward, Stanton, and Thomas. And so will history, in the hearts of the people, group those to whom we owe our existence as a Nation.

(Hung in the Capitol at Washington.)

SALMON P. CHASE.

*(Bust in the Capitol at Washington.)*

SALMON P. CHASE.

## SALMON P. CHASE.

THIS gentleman, New Englander by birth, came to the West when quite a youth. A man of fine intellect and rare culture, he had a cold, unimpulsive temperament that gave to his manners a dignified reserve that repelled familiarity and interfered materially with his popularity. His fine presence, for he was tall, erect, and admirably proportioned, with his grave manner, impressed the crowd, and created respect without liking. These qualities are, however, more potent in the end than more genial ones. Many a statesman honored in his grave owed his success in life to the length of his legs and the solemnity of his countenance. The late Tom Corwin, of Ohio, a man of genius and infinite humor, on one occasion, when lecturing me for my disposition to joke with a crowd, said:

"Don't do it, my boy. You should ever remember that the crowd always looks up to the ringmaster and down on the clown. It resents that which amuses. The clown is the more clever fellow of the two, but he is despised. If you would succeed in life you must be solemn, solemn as an ass. All the great monuments of earth have been built over solemn asses."

Salmon P. Chase was anything but a solemn ass. His intellectual attainments put him at the head of his profession, that of lawyer, before they made him conspicuous as a politician. He was a hard student, and his thoughtful processes assimilated, well and rapidly, the information he acquired.

Looking at Chase through life, and regarding his characteristics since his death, I find now, as I found when we were friends, a mystery in his being a reformer. As I have said, his motive for action was not in his heart. He had no impulses of that sort that I could ever discover. The elevated plane upon which he guided his life, a singularly pure and just one, came of his stern sense of duty. This was not difficult, for he had no youth. He was born an old man in that respect, and had no heartfelt impulses to fetch on indiscretions. He never used tobacco in any form, nor wine save as social decorum called for its use. He had passion without sentiment, and when he married it was with more regard for the proprieties of life than the gratification of a lover's mad impulse, and herein lies the contradiction that makes him a mystery. He had a high regard for the proprieties of life and none whatever for the law. Now reform is not reputable. Intrenched wrong finds its most powerful defence in its respectability. They who seek to undermine the respectable are low fellows, and the very name assumed by the reformer becomes one of reproach. Long after the death of our Saviour to be called a Christian was to have

applied a term of fearful stain which justified immediate and shameful death, as cruel and shameful as that awarded our God by the respectable classes of Jerusalem. When Salmon P. Chase gave in his open adhesion to the anti-slavery cause he was called an Abolitionist. He might as well, considering the effect, have been denounced as a thief or a burglar. His reputable friends—and having married into a wealthy and aristocratic family, he had many such—looked down on him with pity and contempt.

Chase, in his shy, awkward way, cultivated young men remarkable for their evidence of intellect or show of eccentricity. I was one of his protégés. I write this without claiming any compliment on that score. One defect in this eminent statesman was his ignorance of human nature. He did not know one man from another save in the man's profession. He took those very men at the valuation acquaintance put on them. This ignorance added greatly to his success, for we lose more through our suspicions than we gain through our credulousness. We are given to the strange belief that back of every man's act lies a selfish motive, and this, although we are taught by a study of ourselves that nearly all our actions originate in impulses or from circumstances over which we have no control, or from both, and seldom, if ever, from a cold, calculating consideration of how we may use others to our own advantage. At the same time, Chase's confidence gave his upright character its only taint in the eyes of the world.

He had around him, from first to last, about the worst set of men that ever environed a leader, and these gave interpretation to many of his acts. These fellows, of course, used him to enrich or elevate themselves, and the people at large held their master responsible.

On this matter of good or bad human nature Mr. Chase could reason, in a general way, with the terse epigrammatic force so peculiar to him, without being able to make personal application of his knowledge. I remember, for example, visiting the Ohio penitentiary with him while he was Governor of the State. Returning, we walked to the Capitol. After a long silence, the Governor said, "There is not much difference between the convicts imprisoned in those walls and the ordinary run of people outside." This did not surprise me, for I had long before learned my friend's character blindness, but when he continued I was surprised: "These poor fellows are not wicked, they are weak; they have not sense enough to be cautious, nor have they enough strength of character to resist temptation. The law catches the small rogues, the big rascals are too wary to approach the net. I think sometimes that our criminals are not in the penitentiary but in the churches. The cool, selfish villains wear the cloak of religion and hedge themselves about with the intensest respectability. They are our bad men, and from them we suffer."

"Yes," I added, "that was the sort that crucified

Christ. He suffered, not for his treason, but that he was a low fellow—the associate of the poor and an agrarian who taught that property was continuous theft before that Frenchman made his discovery. The wealthy Moses and sons, the high priests, the aristocrats of that day and place just sickened over such vulgar notions."

"You do wrong," said my friend, "to habituate yourself, as I perceive you do, to vulgarizing the great truths of revelation. It was an awful event, let the motives and passions of poor human nature have been what they may. We should see only our Christ crucified, and not the horrible crowd that did the deed without knowing what they did."

There was no cant, not the slightest shade of hypocrisy in this rebuke. Chase was truly of a deeply religious nature. He believed with the trusting faith of a child in the truths of revelation, not as an abstract thing separate and apart from his daily life, but this faith colored all his character, and entered into the most minute details of his life. We have to remember, in this connection, that he amended the Proclamation of Emancipation by that closing invocation to the Supreme Being which President Lincoln had forgotten, or probably never thought of.

In common with half a dozen other young fellows admitted to the bar, but not admitted to the practice, I had the honor of Chase's intimacy, and it is amusing to look back upon the patronizing manner in which we sought to protect him. Of all shades of

political opinion save that of anti slavery, we felt a sorrow that our great man should be engaged in such a vile business as acting and laboring with Abolitionists. To us, as to the community generally, an Abolitionist was not only a negro thief, but an associate of negroes and a disturber of the peace. None the less did we cling to, and seek to give Mr. Chase our protection.

He was to speak, one night, at a little school-house some four miles from Cincinnati, and notice had been served on him that if he did he would be mobbed. This had no effect on Chase. He was a brave man, and a threat of violence only made him the more determined to fill his appointment. Finding our persuasion of no effect, we armed ourselves and made part of the little crowd assembled in the school-house to hear the anti-slavery advocate. Save ourselves, the audience was mostly made up of the long-haired men and short-haired women peculiar to all reforms. The room was small, and lighted by a few tallow dips, which flared and sputtered from the air through the open windows, for it was summer. The meeting being organized, Mr. Chase was introduced and began his argument. He was not a fluent speaker, and had a voice more guttural than resonant. With few gestures he spoke in an even, unemotional way, as if addressing a court. He got little aid from the expression of his fine face, for being extremely near-sighted, he had a way of contracting his eyelids, as if he were turning his sight in on himself. He had

uttered but few sentences, however, before a wild yell from outside, which seemed to go up from every quarter, startled the little audience, and immediately a quantity of eggs were thrown in with great force through the windows. The audience rose to its feet, the women screamed, more in wrath than fear, and the men gave utterance to more profanity than I thought the fanatical were capable of. We, of the body-guard, rushed out, firing our pistols right and left, doing no harm that I ever heard of, but putting the ruffians so effectually to flight that we had no further interruption of that sort. Pistols were things not counted on by the crowd accustomed to ride over Abolitionists without resistance. When we returned to the house, Mr. Chase was wiping a rotten egg from his bosom with a delicate linen handkerchief, and he then went on with his speech, with no other sign upon him than a heightened color on his handsome face. Through this sort of thing a refined, dignified gentleman came up to be recognized, in the end, as the able leader, if not orator, of a party destined to conduct a great war, and control the Government for a quarter of a century after. How he came to be an Abolitionist in the first instance is as strange as that in the end he should be thrust aside by the party that he had done so much to make a power.

It was in the office of Chase and Ball, on Third Street in Cincinnati, that the Republican party of to-day was born. Doctor Gamaliel Bailey, a man remarkable for his combination of thought and

action, called the little group of strong men together. There were present Chase, Birney, Lewis, and others whose names I have forgotten, and before them Doctor Bailey laid his plan of an organization. He said it was absurd to have a party outside of the Constitution making war on the Government itself. While the organic law might be a compact with hell, it could not be successfully assailed in an open rebellion. The proper course was to accept the guarantees of the Constitution as to slavery in the States, but to oppose its extension. This, in the end, would be the death of the iniquity, for as slave labor exhausted the soil it lived on, more territory was as necessary for its existence as the air we breathe.

This shrewd proposition was at once adopted by the leading minds of the anti-slavery class. The fanatics, however, for a time, gave as much trouble to these practical chiefs as the Whig and Democratic parties. It was not until the fight grew fierce over Kansas and Nebraska that the rank and file swung into line, and by holding the balance between the evenly divided parties, as to numbers, became a power in the land.

I have often thought since, that had the Southern slaveholders possessed the ability which distinguished these early Abolitionists what a different result we would be putting to record. If, instead of setting up a Government of their own, these Southern leaders had fought for what they were pleased to term their rights under the Constitution and the flag of our

Union, they would have had the sympathy of a majority of the North and the co-operation of nearly the entire Democratic party on the free side of Mason and Dixon's line. But when they seceded into a confederacy, threw out an alien flag, and fired on Sumter, they changed the issue from a question of States' rights under the Constitution to an armed conflict between rival sections; and the war went on, not to save or destroy slavery, but to save or destroy the nation.

This was Chase's thought as well as my own. I have often heard him say that we owed more to Jeff. Davis for his folly, than to Abraham Lincoln for his cautious wisdom.

The Whig party, that was born of the old Federal organization and Henry Clay, and had great men and great measures, without principles other than a conservatism of property privileges, went to pieces and the anti-slavery organization fell heir to its votes. Before this, however, Chase, holding the balance of power, was first made Senator and afterward Governor of Ohio.

That man is great who rises successfully to the emergency in which he is called to act. Chase, in the Senate, represented nobody save Morse and Townsend, the two pivotal votes on which he was returned; but his dignity and power made his sovereign State glad to recognize him as her Senator, at a time when our House of Lords held the highest political intellect in the land, and was not, as

now, an incompetent collection of millionaires. As Governor he not only consolidated and held the Whig vote, but he drew over a large Democratic support of young men glad to recognize a leader of such brain and power.

When the newly-organized party met at Chicago to nominate a presidential candidate, Chase stood prominent as an available man. The Seward party fighting Chase fortunately opened the way to the nomination of Abraham Lincoln.

President Lincoln called Chase to the Cabinet as Secretary of the Treasury. This was a casualty. Had Mr. Lincoln known of the war that was to follow his inauguration, it is not likely that he would have selected a man so entirely ignorant of finance, and all that pertains to that vexed business, as this man, who had never given the subject a thought, let alone any study. An illustration of this is found in the Secretary calling in the good Father Edward Purcell, of Cincinnati, to advise with him as to what measures were the best to carry on the fiscal agency of a great Government, so strangely intrusted to his untried hands.

The Secretary of the Treasury proved an eminent Secretary on the fact I see demonstrated every day, and that fact is that a man is the most successful in the business which he knows the least about. The man who buys to gratify his own taste is the man who will be his own only customer when it comes to selling again. The ignorant man, seeking

to cater to the tastes and wants of his patrons, is eager to learn, and open to all information in that direction. The manager of a theatre who does not know Shakespeare from Dion Boucicault, and looks to the box office for guidance on the stage; the bookseller, ignorant of the inside of all books, who looks solely to the purchaser of books; the editor who writes down to the depraved tastes of the multitude; the shoemaker who looks to the corns and bunions of his buyers instead of his own, are all illustrations of what I say. Salmon P. Chase not only took the good father into his confidence, but listened with inexhaustible patience to the practical financiers who knew less on the subject that made their business than any other class of men in the country.

The war came on. It was the costliest war ever known to a civilized people, for we had to pay cash for our experience. To get up a regiment called for as much money as to govern a State—not less than a million dollars per year for each thousand men. To put an army of seventy-five thousand armed men into the field, and to keep them there, bade fair to bankrupt the Government. The Secretary, in this awful emergency, found at his back an empty treasury and a ruined credit. There was no time to levy and collect taxes, and had there been the secession of the Southern States carried out our great staple on which our wonderful prosperity had been built, and the artillery that shot down our flag at Sumter utterly prostrated the business of the country.

The only way open was to borrow, and even that seemed closed to the anxious Government at Washington. Capital is not only sensitive to danger, but from that very fact is selfish, and with no touch whatever of patriotism. We read of noble women contributing their jewelry to a cause, of pious men of God melting their bells into cannon, but we never read of money-getters fetching out their hidden bags under patriotic impulse in aid of a forlorn hope.

The country was aroused to a frenzy by the insolence of the South in firing on the flag of the Fathers, and men, God bless them, volunteered to fight in such numbers that the Government found difficulty in enrolling and arming them. Capital was also vociferous. It took the iron-bound oath of allegiance at all hours. It made speeches of much sound, if not eloquence, urging men to volunteer, but no man brought out his hoarded gold to aid the struggling Government in its hour of peril.

The able Secretary lost no time in appeals to the Shylocks. He turned to the noble, patriotic people, who were wheeling into line to the roll of the drums, for the credit he needed, and issued the greenback. A history of this transaction is curiously illustrative of the two men, Lincoln and Chase, concerned therein. Of course the idea of issuing money directly by the Government to meet an emergency was as old as governments themselves. But Amasa Walker, a distinguished financier of New England, had a thought that was new. He suggested that the notes

thus issued directly from the Government to the people as currency should bear interest. This for the purpose not only of making the notes popular, but for the purpose of preventing inflation by inducing people to hoard the notes as an investment when the demands of trade failed to call them into circulation as a currency. This idea struck Mr. David Taylor, of Ohio, with such force that he sought Mr. Lincoln and urged him to put the project into immediate execution. The President listened patiently, and at the end said, "That is a good idea, Taylor, but you must go to Chase. He is running that end of the machine, and has time to consider your proposition."

Taylor sought the Secretary of the Treasury, and laid before him Amasa Walker's plan. Chase heard him through in a cold, unpleasant manner, and then said, "That is all very well, Mr. Taylor, but there is one little obstacle in the way, that makes the plan impracticable, and that is the Constitution."

Saying this, he turned to his desk as if dismissing both Mr. Taylor and his proposition at the same moment. The poor enthusiast felt rebuked and humiliated. He returned to the President, however, and reported his defeat. Mr. Lincoln looked at the would-be financier with the expression at times so peculiar to his homely face, and that left one in doubt as to whether he was jesting or in earnest.

"Taylor," he exclaimed, "go back to Chase and tell him not to bother himself about the Constitution.

Say that I have that sacred instrument here at the White House, and I am guarding it with great care."

Mr. David Taylor demurred to this on the ground that Mr. Chase showed by his manner that he knew all about it and didn't wish to be bored by any suggestions.

"We'll see about that," exclaimed the President, and taking a card from the table he wrote upon it:

"The Secretary of the Treasury will please consider Mr. Taylor's proposition. We must have money, and I think this a good way to get it. A. LINCOLN."

Armed with this, the real father of the greenbacks again sought the Secretary. He was received more politely than before, but was cut short in his advocacy of the measure by a proposition for both of them to see the President. They did so, and Mr. Chase made a long and elaborate constitutional argument against the proposed measure. "Chase," said Mr. Lincoln, after the Secretary had concluded, "down in Illinois I was held to be a pretty good lawyer, and I believe I could answer every point you have made, but I don't feel called upon to do it. This thing reminds me of a story I read in a newspaper the other day. It was of an Italian captain, who run his vessel on a rock and knocked a hole in her bottom. He set his men to pumping and he went to prayers before a figure of the Virgin in the bow of the ship. The leak gained on them. It looked at last as if the

vessel would go down with all on board. The captain, at length, in a fit of rage at not having his prayers answered, seized the figure of the Virgin and threw it overboard. Suddenly the leak stopped, the water was pumped out, and the vessel got safely into port. When docked for repairs, the statue of the Virgin Mary was found stuck head-foremost in the hole."

"I don't see, Mr. President, the precise application of your story," said Mr. Chase.

"Why, Chase, I don't intend precisely to throw the Virgin Mary overboard, and by that I mean the Constitution, but I will stick it in the hole if I can. These rebels are violating the Constitution to destroy the Union, I will violate the Constitution, if necessary, to save the Union, and I suspect, Chase, that our Constitution is going to have a rough time of it before we get done with this row. Now, what I want to know is whether, Constitution aside, this project of issuing interest-bearing notes is a good one."

"I must say," responded Mr. Chase, "that with the exception you make, it is not only a good one, but the only way open to us to raise money. If you say so, I will do my best to put it into immediate and practical operation, and you will never hear from me any opposition on this subject."

The people eagerly accepted the loan which the capitalists were prompt to depreciate and dishonor.

No one can measure correctly the masterly man-

agement of this statesman, who does not accept and appreciate the difficulties that beset his way. The intense selfishness of the class that owed its all to the Government he was struggling to sustain, bade fair to be more fatal to us than all the armed legions of the South, fierce and successful as they were. While our soldiers in the field and the laborer left at home accepted the greenback at par, hungry, unpatriotic capital higgled over its marble counters, discounting the currency that was the life-blood of our Government. It was not until after the fortunes of war took a turn, and the "lost cause," through exhaustion, staggered from fields that were disasters to it, although shouted over as victories, that the money power came out cautiously at first, not in aid of the Government, but to invest for a profit. Government bonds were bought with greenbacks got at a ruinous discount, and these same bonds were pledged for redemption in coin.

I write this without feeling against the capitalist. We must take the world as it is. I suppose a rich man is as necessary to our existence as any other objectionable creature the necessity for the existence of which is a mystery. He does live, and his living was a sad obstacle in the way of success to our imperilled nationality. To appreciate, as I have said, the eventual triumph of Salmon P. Chase, we must know, and appreciate, the capitalist.

The peculiar power, the sacredness that attaches to money, in the eyes of men, has always been a

mystery to me. Now, it is accepted as the right of Government, when threatened with violence, to enter the poor man's hut and bid him come out and shoulder his musket to fight for his Government. The poor fellow, with more or less tearful leave-taking of the family of which he is the humble bread-winner —and without waiting to negotiate a gold-bearing bond—marches out to be killed or mutilated, with no other compensation than his miserable pittance, that, if wounded, attenuates into a pension if his Government survives, or if killed he has the sweet ceremony of strewing flowers over his grave.

How the heart thrills to the memory of the noble response our poor men made to this demand. One remembers those broad-shouldered handsome fellows, in the bloom of life, crowding the cars in laughter, amid the roll of drums, the waving of banners, with flowers thrown to them from trembling hands, and farewell smiles that covered aching hearts. And one remembers how they returned in wooden boxes or limped home with mangled bodies, or never returned, but filled unknown graves in far-off battle-fields, and even now seems to hear the desolation that, like a low, wailing undertone to the strains of triumph, swept over all the land.

Well, if the Government, in this way, can take the poor man's life, can it not take the rich man's money? What is there so sacred about this thing that it must be guarded above life? What is it, in gold, that the blood-stain does not tarnish, and why

is it that what God shuts out from heaven as accursed should be our god on earth?

I hear the capitalist denouncing this as demagogism, as insincere, and not true. Does not capital pay the taxes? Does not capital give these soldiers their wages, and insure them their pensions? No, it does nothing of the sort, and you add insult to injury by the assertion. For a thousand years the wisest law-makers have been striving to make accumulated capital pay its share of taxation, and they are as near the impossible now as when they began. As well try to make the pyramid support itself on its apex. Taxation reaches down to the base; but the base is labor, and labor pays all. The man riding to mill on a sack of grain does not relieve the horse under him by shifting the sack, even if the rider transfers it to his shoulder. The sons of the men who went out to fight are paying the debt that grew out of their fathers' service, are paying the pensions, and, more than all, are redeeming the bonds that have in fact been paid twice over before their redemption.

No better illustration of the stress under which the Government labored can be given than the creation of the national banks. To fetch these moneyed corporations, the banks, in accord with, not to say support of, the Government that gives them protection, the most extraordinary privileges were granted them. To farm out the fiscal agency found in the creation of a circulating medium was no new thing, but to permit these corporations to purchase Govern-

ment bonds in depreciated currency, at a heavy discount, and then accept the same bonds at par as a basis for a circulating medium, was an arrangement that nothing but the poverty and distress of the treasury could justify. Secretary Chase claimed, in extenuation, that he meant this to be only a war measure, to cease when the armed conflict ended. That this extraordinary system rests entirely on the indebtedness of the Government, and must cease when that indebtedness is paid, gives plausibility to his plea.

A national debt, however, of the magnitude of that left us by the war is of slow liquidation. Before the eminent War Treasurer died he saw the consequence of his blunder, and that a costly and oppressive system of banking had been fixed upon the people for all time to come. It had a certain hold upon the favor of business men, from a false contrast that it offered between our present system and that of the old State banks which preceded it. This contrast is false, for the evil complained of in the banks of a State's creation was not in the legitimate banking they did, but in the currency they issued and on which they did their business. These were notes of the banks authorized by the States, and were at a heavy discount beyond the limits of their several territories. The war which obliterated State lines existing under the old colonial superstition of sovereignty gave us a nation and a nation's credit for a currency. The national banks are precisely

the same as the old State banks—no better, no worse —but the currency in which their business is done differs, and in this difference lies the benefit of national banking.

Secretary Chase saw clearly the evil he had inflicted upon the people he had served, and his anxiety to secure the Presidency originated in his earnest desire to correct this one great blunder of his administration. He had called into existence a financial system that, instead of being firm, uniform, and safe, lived on a fluctuation which swings continually from one extreme to the other, and is, therefore, uncertain, unstable, and dangerous.

To understand this it is necessary to recognize the fact that money as a measure of value is an abstract idea made practical by the Government. Based on coin, it gets its use through the stamp or sanction of the Government. The trading world, in the ages past, selected the material through which to express this idea of value—a material which above all others has a quality that prohibits its use as a circulating medium, and this is its scarcity. Were coin, gold and silver, abundant enough to serve as a currency it would lose its great quality and be no better than iron and lead. When the Government, then, coins and stamps the precious metal it merely takes the necessary step to keep alive the visible symbol of an abstract proposition.

Money for circulation through which exchange is facilitated, like all other commodities, is measured

by the great measure of value. When, therefore, a note of the value of one dollar is issued, it is not itself the dollar, for we read on it a promise to pay that amount, and its value rests on the credit of the Government making the issue. In this the Government does not differ from the individual. If the people have confidence, the promises of the Government pass at par. If not, they fall below until, like the old Continental paper, or that of the Southern Confederacy, they cease to possess any value whatever.

It is, therefore, a popular delusion which tells us that the scarcity or abundance of this circulating medium affects prices. It is the paper that is fluctuating, and not the products. We, accepting the general belief, cannot comprehend how it is that during our greatest depression in business there is a heavier volume of currency out than when trade is active and the times prosperous. The Government, in its ordinary expenditures, may issue promises to pay as money, to the fullest extent, without creating trade or restoring confidence. A man may have his coffers stored with gold, let alone greenbacks, and he will not use five dollars to purchase a barrel of flour until he can see where that barrel can be placed at a profit.

What we mean by the evil of a swollen or a contracted currency is the evil of an over-stimulated or depressed credit. And this power we have placed in the hands of a few corporations. All our

business is done on credit, from the greenback of the Government to the book account of the grocer. Now were trade dependent on the actual wants of the community, it would be in a measure stable, uniform, and safe. To stimulate this in a healthy manner the natural greed of humanity is sufficient. But there is such a thing as artificial stimulation, and such a thing as gambling, and herein lies the evil of farming out the credit of the Government to a few corporations. It is in accord with their selfish interests to stimulate credit when trade is healthy and active, as it is their safety to contract when over-excited speculation ends and pay-day arrives. Now, while a man will not employ five dollars in the purchase of a barrel of flour until satisfied that he can sell at a profit, he may be induced to believe that a profit will be found in the future, or, what is more common, to make one of a combination which, controlling the market, can force a profit.

It is the duty of a Government to give the people a circulating medium, and this to the fullest extent of its credit. Mr. Chase saw this fact, and in it the error of his act in creating the national banks, but he never could divest his mind of the popular confusion about money as a measure of value and money as a circulating medium. When Chief-Justice of the Supreme Court, he joined the majority in deciding that notes of the Government were not legal tenders under our Constitution. Whether unconstitutional

or not, to one's common-sense the absurdity of the conclusion is confounding. What the Government issues the Government is bound to receive, and that which the Government deals in as money is, of necessity, money.

A man of culture seldom fairly appreciates the mind, however strong, that has not passed through the ripening process of educational training. This fact stood between Chase and Lincoln. The Secretary felt, rather than saw, the superiority of his President, and attributed the masterful control of the greater man to the power of his higher position. In addition to this, Salmon P. Chase was the only member of the Cabinet who was shocked at the coarse humor of their chief. The Secretary of the Treasury had little of this quality in him, and the little he possessed was a refined sort quite foreign to the indelicate, coarse wit of Mr. Lincoln. Chase put to record the solemn fact that when the Cabinet was called together to consider the Emancipation Proclamation, the President opened proceedings by reading to the amazed Secretaries nearly all of Artemus Ward's book, then just published. All the Cabinet, except Mr. Chase, laughed loudly over Artemus, and the President, looking in the face of his solemn Secretary, persisted, and with his constitutional advisers, laughed more boisterously than ever.

The fact had come to be recognized, by President and Cabinet, that Chase's disturbed condition was in itself a source of amusement, and Mr. Lincoln seldom

lost an opportunity to entertain himself and others in this direction. Some of these occasions both Stanton and Chase related to me, the one in an aggrieved tone, and the other between bursts of laughter, and the reader may judge of their sort when I state that scarcely one would bear printing.

To these small matters may be attributed Chase's withdrawal from the Cabinet. The place was not only overladen with heavy responsibility, but rendered irksome by the President's treatment. He seemed to have no true appreciation of the labors and success of his subordinates. All that Chase, Stanton, and Seward accomplished in their several departments was taken as a matter of course, and something by no means unusual. He expended no anxiety on the cares of his own position, lost no sleep, nor appetite, nor flesh under the enormous weight placed upon his shoulders, and he could not comprehend why his subordinates should be troubled by a sense of responsibility or seek comfort in praise.

Salmon P. Chase has been severely commented on for what is called his intriguing against his chief for the place of President. This is unjust. To seek the Presidency is an honorable ambition, and Chase not only felt under no obligation to the man he honestly believed he had made a success, and his ambition was stimulated by the loftiest patriotism. He knew that unless he continued to hold command of the system of finance he had introduced that system would cause more evil in time of peace than it had accom-

plished good in the hour of war. And experience is proving the wisdom of his prophecy. To-day the Government is kept on a war footing by the very measures Chase inaugurated to end the war.

In addition to this, our Secretary saw the evil of an irresponsible military rule, which Seward and Stanton, under sanction of the President, had inaugurated. Chase never approved of this arbitrary power in which his associates delighted, nay rioted. "We are doing more to destroy self-government by these arbitrary arrests and illegal punishments in the North than the Confederates of the South in their attempt to wipe us out as a nation." "Again," he said, "the evil of war comes after the war, it leaves an army of cripples, an army of thieves, and an army of prostitutes. We shall suffer more from West Point than we have suffered from the rebellion. The taste for military glory will give us a succession of military imbeciles for rulers."

Having succeeded to all that made him eminent through independent votes based on Democratic doctrines, Chase appealed to the Democratic Party for a nomination. He nearly succeeded. A drunken harangue made by an eminent Democrat the night before the nomination lost him Ohio and just enough votes to insure defeat.

The elevation of this troublesome subordinate to the position of Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court is generally attributed by thoughtless minds to Mr. Lincoln's shrewdness in thus shelving

a dangerous rival. I do not concur in this. Abraham Lincoln felt no fear of a civilian. He did have a wholesome regard for the military men the war had brought to the front, and the one man of all others he was careful to keep from that front was the first idol of the Free-soil, afterward Republican Party, John C. Frémont. He recognized in the popular Pathfinder a man of genius who, to a thoughtful mind, added the qualities which go to make a leader of men. He sent Chase from the noisy arena of the political world to the solemn quiet of our highest court with no other thought than that which generally actuated him of finding the fittest man for any position.

The circumstances attending the selection of Mr. Chase as furnished me by the eminent jurist Justice Field were as follows :

"In the spring of 1864," writes Mr. Justice Field, "Chief Justice Taney was taken very ill, and reported to be dying. The prospect of a speedy vacancy in the office of Chief Justice naturally led to suggestions as to his probable successor. In the previous year a majority of the Justices, at the instance of Mr. Justice Davis, and through him informed President Lincoln that, in case of a vacancy in the office during the recess of the Court, they would be pleased to see the appointment given to Mr. Justice Swayne. But at this time (1864) Mr. Justice Miller and I had some conversation on the subject of the succession, and we both came to the

conclusion that Secretary Chase was the proper man for the place, as he was familiar with all the questions out of which had grown the Civil War, and was acquainted with all the legislation of Congress during its progress, and with the new revenue and currency systems in particular. For these reasons, and he also being an eminent jurist, and of broad intellect, we considered his appointment to be very desirable.

"We did not make any comparison between him and Mr. Justice Swayne, for whose qualifications and character we had the highest appreciation. Our preference for Mr. Chase was based on the grounds I have stated. On the same day, while walking on Pennsylvania Avenue toward Willard's Hotel, I met Mr. Chase, and after the ordinary salutations, asked him how he would like to be Chief Justice. He seemed surprised at the question and asked me what I meant. I replied, giving him the information we had of the condition of Chief Justice Taney, and the probability that he would not live through the day, and stating that Mr. Justice Miller and I had suggested his name as the Chief Justice's successor. He replied that he had not thought of the position, but he was evidently interested in the suggestion, for he turned and accompanied me as far as Willard's Hotel. In the course of our conversation he asked me if I had consulted Mr. Sumner on the subject. I replied that I had not, but that I would see him immediately. Mr. Sumner then lived at the corner

of F and Thirteenth Streets. I went to his room, and there found him at his desk surrounded by papers. I told him my object in calling. He replied :

"'I will see the President at once.' And he immediately rose from the table and left the house for that purpose.

"Chief Justice Taney recovered from his illness and the subject of his successor was, of course, dropped. At the end of the term I called to pay my respects to him. I found him exceedingly feeble, so much so that when I gave him my photograph, which he had requested, I noticed that his sight had failed him, and I was pained by the thought that I was probably looking upon his venerable face for the last time. I went immediately from his residence to the White House to see the President. I found him engaged with Mr. Holt and apparently absorbed in the matter which was the subject of their consultation. I remarked that I had called to pay my respects before leaving for California, and also to say that, in all probability, before next term of the Supreme Court, the duty would devolve upon him of appointing a Chief Justice, and that I desired to say a few words to him on that subject. He then asked me if I could not remain in the city a day longer for that purpose. I said I could, and he made an appointment for me to see him at twelve o'clock the next day. At our interview, on the following day, he said, before I mentioned Mr. Chase's name :

"'I suppose you favor the appointment of Mr. Chase to the Chief Justiceship.'

"He probably got that impression from his interview with Mr. Sumner, who had doubtless reported to him the conversation he had with me about a month before. The President then asked me how the profession would take the appointment of Mr. Chase, and said he entertained a very high regard for him. He also remarked that there were parties who were endeavoring to 'put up a bar' between him and Mr. Chase, but that he would not let them do it. In the course of the conversation he asked me how Mrs. Sprague would like the appointment of her father; that he had heard the remark attributed to her that her father 'was not to be set aside by a place on the bench.' To that inquiry I made no reply.

"The impression left upon my mind from that conversation was, that he was favorably disposed to Mr. Chase's appointment as successor to Chief Justice Taney.

"Some weeks afterwards Mr. Taney died, Mr. Chase was appointed to succeed him, and his appointment was unanimously confirmed without the usual reference to a committee."

Salmon P. Chase carried to his high position on the Supreme Bench not only a well-trained intellect of great power, but one singularly well fitted through the temperament that sustained and controlled it, for judicial duties. Although a partisan

through life, no man could more readily divest himself of party bias, when it became necessary to look, as a judge, impartially upon both sides. In this he was greatly helped by his religious convictions which, without creating a bigot, made every breath he drew a prayer.

As one of the leading minds of President Lincoln's powerful Cabinet he had been, very unwillingly it is true, a party to much that in the ways of war did violence to the recognized trusts of our Constitution. The war power had ridden down and nearly destroyed all that it had been carried on to sustain and perpetuate. To divest his mind of the passions engendered by such a strife, and calmly and justly adjudicate upon cases when the late enemy was a party in Court, called for all the higher powers of his admirable mind and character. Fortunately, as I have said, through all the conflict, he had retained, in a measure, his composure and religious sense of right, so that it was possible for him to sit in judgment where he had once been the partisan.

The Supreme Court of the United States is the only part of the Government at Washington still existing in all the purity and strength with which the entire political structure was created by the fathers. It yet remains a perfect tower amid the ruins that time, war, and decay have made its surroundings. What the fathers meant, this great tribunal tells with no uncertain sound, and to preside as Chief Justice of this grave Court, the late

Secretary of a War Administration was called. No more trying moment could have been selected to test the fairness and ability of this eminent man.

The war of arms had ceased. The terrible conflict, waged by men who soaked with blood every foot of ground they abandoned, had worn itself out before overwhelming numbers, and, from the ruin left, the Government was called upon to reconstruct our empire. How to accomplish this made a question with the solving of which Secretary Chase had much to do, and to consider and decide many real and important matters of dispute he then put on the ermine.

The Secretary Chase had said to the writer of this, that:

"If the Southern people had fought in the Union for the Union, as the fathers gave it to us, without setting up an alien government under an alien flag, they would have had a better chance for success."

What he meant by this was that the Southern people would have had, in that case, the active sympathy and support of the Northern Democracy, that was thrown out and silenced by the formation of the alien government under which the Confederates fought. Not only this, but the Southern leaders swept from under themselves their one ground of excuse for armed resistance.

The truth is that Chase was a more consistent and far abler States' rights man than any of the Southern statesmen, if we except Henry A. Wise

and John Tyler. He and William H. Seward as governors of Ohio and New York, had set up the sovereignty of the State against the aggressions of the slave power. In addition to this he belonged to a class of reformers who believe that when the argument is made the cause is won. Able as such advocates generally are, they fail to take into account that through the ignorance and passions of the multitude the argument is unheard, to say nothing of the din of a conflict in which the voice of reason is drowned.

The Secretary was much amused by a comment I made on old John Tyler and his peace convention, then in session at Washington. I said that the venerable ex-President reminded me of the story told of the old gentleman who tried his first voyage at sea. He retired to his stateroom, pulled on his night-cap, and carefully adjusted himself to repose. When the vessel left the smooth waters of the harbor and began rolling upon the waves of the ocean in something of a storm, he sent his man to the captain to request that officer to stop the sailors from running about, for they shook the vessel so that it made him sick.

Said Chase, on another occasion, long after the war:

"There was no appeal to reason that would have prevented the war, and there was no exercise of reason that could save us from the fatal consequences. It is no exaggeration to say that, while we

freed the negro, we enslaved ourselves, and how much soever State sovereignty may be as you say a colonial superstition, the rotten ground-rail of a Virginia abstraction, it was the only system upon which the conflicting interests could be reconciled, and thereby the freedom of a people spread over a wide continent be preserved. This centralization of power at Washington must be checked, or the late war will prove the forerunner of many wars."

Chase was at the time he uttered this a candidate for nomination at the hands of the Democracy.

It seems strange that one so imbued with the doctrines of States' rights should be the author of reconstruction as it was enforced by the Government at Washington upon the people so lately in revolt. I am not certain as to his authorship of that scheme. I first heard it stated on the floor of the House by the Hon. Samuel Shellaberger, of Ohio, and I am under the impression that the entire project found birth in the fertile brain of that distinguished representative. The process of reasoning that brought both Chase and Seward to the position they held at the close of the war was clear and conclusive. It taught that the old thirteen States having entered the Union were bound by the legitimate results of such act. When, therefore, new territory was added by purchase and conquest, and States were called into existence by the Government at Washington, very much as a State creates new counties, they were impressed with a character that bound the old thir-

teen to something more than the first compact called for. It was very much as if the Siamese twins had agreed to the ligature that bound them together, and then found that a severance would prove the death of one or both. Of course each was bound to fight for that which was self-preservation. When, therefore, the Southern States abandoned their rights as States of the Union, and set up a foreign Government, they shifted their ground, however untenable, to one that depended altogether upon their power to maintain themselves by force of arms. Having defeated them in this there was but one course open to the Government, and that was to treat them as territories, and for Congress to reconstruct the South precisely as States had been made from the Louisiana purchase, or California conquest.

The conclusions reached by the Chief Justice and afterwards embodied with some emendations, appears in a letter written by him to Mr. Justice Field, which I copy as follows:

WASHINGTON, April 30, 1886.

MY DEAR JUDGE: It grieved me very much to hear from your brother, Mr. Cyrus W. Field, that you have been quite ill. I supposed that you were now in or very near California. You must take the best care of yourself, not only for the sake of your family but of your country, which now needs true patriotism as well as legal learning upon the bench. I feel all the interest of a warm personal friendship in your welfare. It is not in my nature to forget friends even when serious differences of judgment and political affinities come in to make separation; and no such differences come between us.

Do you remember when, just before the end of the term in the spring of 1864, you met me on the avenue, and expressed your warm wish that I might fill the place I now occupy? If you have forgotten it, I have not, nor shall I ever forget it. It took me by surprise, but was very grateful to my feelings.

What do you think of the plan of reconstruction, or rather of completing reconstruction, presented by the Committee of Fifteen? To me it seems all very well, provided it can be carried; but I am afraid it is, as people say, rather too big a contract. So far as I have had opportunity of conversing with Senators and Representatives, I have recommended to confine constitutional amendments to two points: (1) No payment of rebel debt and no payment for slaves; (2) No representation beyond the constitutional basis. And, as so many are trying their heads at form, I drew up these two amendments according to my ideas, as follows:

ARTICLE 14.—*Section* 1. Representatives shall be apportioned among the several States according to their respective numbers; but whenever in any State the elective franchise shall be denied to any of its inhabitants, being male citizens of the United States, and above the age of twenty-one years, for any cause except insurrection or rebellion against the United States, the basis of representation in such State shall be reduced, in the proportion which the number of male citizens so excluded shall bear to the whole number of male citizens over twenty-one years of age.

*Section* 2. No payment shall ever be made by the United States for or on account of any debt contracted or incurred in aid of insurrection or rebellion against the United States; or for or on account of the emancipation of slaves.

And I proposed farther that the submission of this article to the States should be accompanied by a concurrent resolution to this effect:

"That whenever any of the States which are declared to be in insurrection and rebellion by the proclamation of the President of the United States, dated July 1, 1862, shall have ratified the foregoing article, Senators and Representatives from such ratifying State or States ought to be admitted to seats in the Senate and House of Representatives, respectively, in the

like manner as for States never declared to be in insurrection; and that, whenever the said article shall have been ratified by three-quarters of the several States, Senators and Representatives ought in like manner to be admitted from all the States."

It has really seemed to me that on this basis the completion of reorganization by the admission of members in both Houses of Congress would be safe; and I have greatly doubted the expediency of going beyond this. In two other important respects the report of the committee does go beyond this: (1) Prohibiting the States from interfering with the rights of citizens; (2) Disfranchising all persons voluntarily engaged in rebellion until 1870; and (3) In granting express legislative power to Congress to enforce all the new constitutional provisions. Will not these propositions be received with some alarm by those who, though opponents of secession or nullification, yet regard the real rights of the States as essential to proper working of our complex system? I do not myself think that any of the proposed amendments will be likely to have injurious effects, unless it be the sweep of disfranchisement; but I repeat, that I fear the recommendation of too much; and, I add, that it seems to me that nothing is gained sufficiently important and sustainable by legislation to warrant our friends in overloading the ship with amendment freight.

But this letter is too long. Pardon and answer. Have you read the opinion and the dissent in the Bank case?

Yours cordially, S. P. CHASE.

The real biographer of this great man will regret that the subject was ever called to other duty than that which he last adorned. Salmon P. Chase had, to an eminent degree, a judicial mind and temperament. He heard with patience and judged with impartiality the testimony of all sides, and, to a quick appreciation of the truth, he added the highest cour-

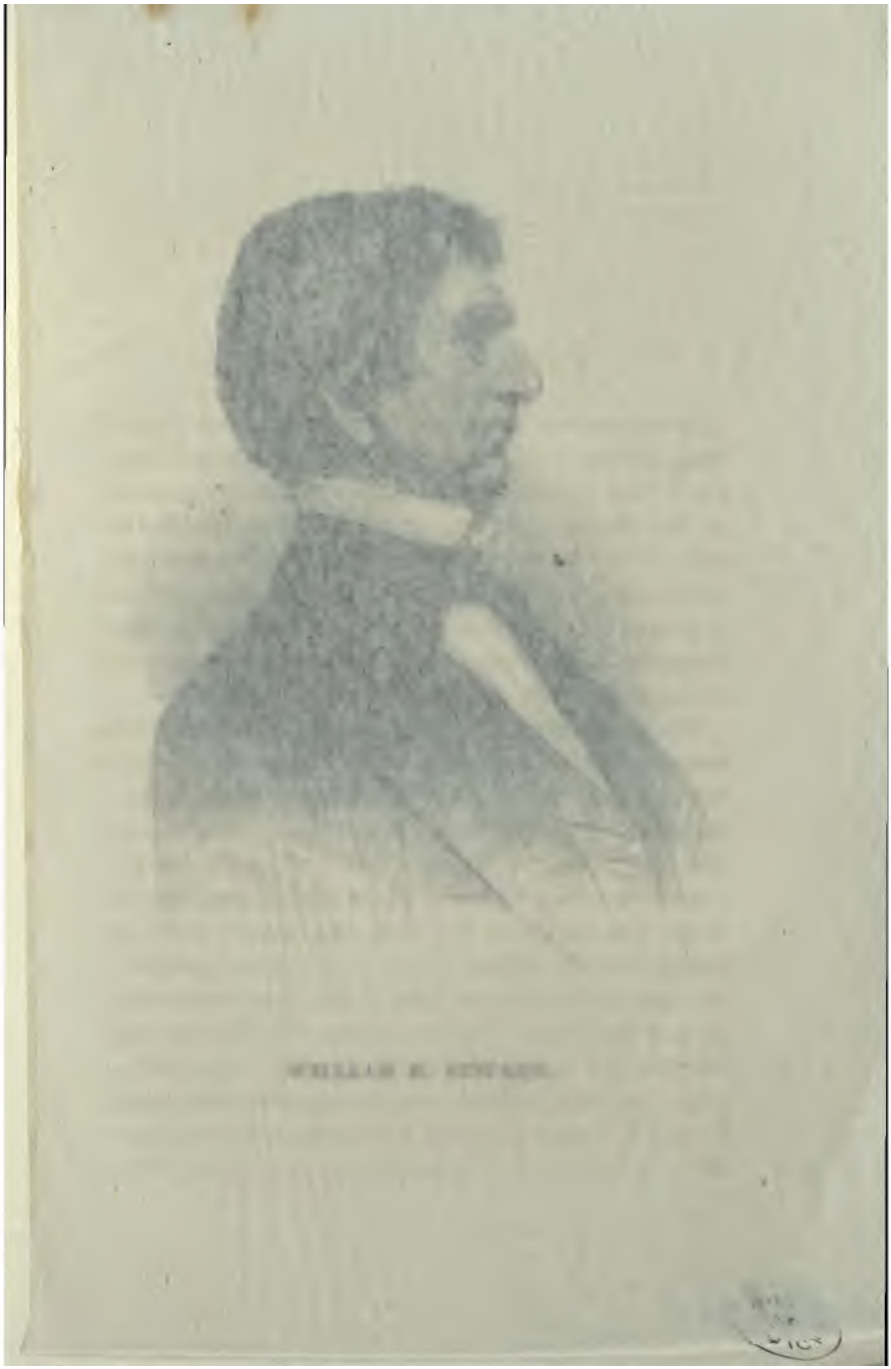
age to judge and determine. He found the silk robes of this high office only after the care which kills had sapped the most precious vitality of his perfect physique. What he might have done as a jurist in his prime may be learned from what he accomplished as Chief Justice in his decline. His stay upon the bench was brief, but long enough for his fame.

No account of Salmon P. Chase is complete without reference to his domestic life. It made, if not the larger, certainly the more important and more graceful part. Married thrice, he lost, in each instance, soon after marriage, the fair women he had selected, and, tenderly devoted to his household, he lived to be both father and mother to the two charming girls in whose sunny presence he seemed to garner all the peace and comfort he possessed on earth. No one can remember him, who knew him at all, separate and apart from the daughter who, inheriting his intellect and force of character, added the charm of tact and womanly beauty that made his home a salon, where the gracious being, princely in her deportment and popular in her sweet condescension, wielded an influence strange to this coarse American world of ours. This lovely and accomplished woman lived in her father, sharing alike his cares and his ambitions. She seemed to die in his death, for her brilliant career clouded into trouble and shameful calumny from the date of his funeral, so that the sad event is doubly sorrowful, and on the monument to his memory we may write a double epitaph.

## WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

It was on my first visit to the National Capitol that, sitting in the gallery of the old Senate Chamber, I had pointed out to me by a friendly member of the House the famous political leaders of that day. The Senate was not then, as now, mainly made up of merely rich men. They were indeed mostly poor in purse, but rich in intellect. I saw Clay, Cass, Douglas, Benton, and others, about whose names our history clusters as light about the stars.

We had about exhausted the list of celebrities when a slender, hook-nosed, gray-eyed, homely man rose to address the Senate from the outer circle of the chamber. His voice was harsh and unpleasant, and his manner extremely angular and awkward. I made a move to leave, when my friend from the House caught me by the arm and said, "Don't go, that is Seward of New York." I had no particular interest in Seward of New York, but fortunately obeyed my friend. I at once observed that he commanded the attention of the Senate. One and all ceased reading, writing, and conversation, and turned toward the speaker. I saw Douglas look with interest, and Clay with an expression of contempt. From



WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

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these, however, I turned to regard the orator. For a few moments he stood by his desk, whirling a pair of glasses in his hand, and then stepped back and leaned upon the railing immediately in the rear of his seat. He clasped his arm about the pillar, and with the other hand grasping the rail, half braced and half leaning, held his awkward position throughout nearly the entire hour of his speech. He had not spoken ten minutes before a startling proposition sent a sensation, expressed in a murmur and a motion, over the entire Senate. I soon lost all sense of his awkward pose and harsh voice in the subject-matter of his discourse, it was so original, startling, quaint, and, at times, truly eloquent. In common with the listening Senate I sat spell-bound, and when he ended amid a general murmur of disapprobation, I could scarcely realize that he had occupied an hour and a quarter. Expressing warm admiration, my friend offered me an introduction to the orator.

The New York Senator received us affably. He seemed much amused and gratified at my frank avowal of admiration, and ended the short interview by inviting us to dinner on the following Sunday.

I found the statesman living as becomes a Senator. He had a furnished house to himself, and it was a handsome house handsomely furnished. This was unusual at that time. Washington City was a Southern town, and while the Government built costly edifices for its use, the inhabitants and political representatives made little or no display. While

the South made all the money the country enjoyed, it retained very little for social comfort or display, or, indeed, for any purpose except gambling. The gambling resorts made as much of a feature at the National Capital as they did at Baden-Baden of that day, or at Monaco of this. The political representatives lived as they pleased, or as their pockets permitted, generally at hotels or boarding-houses. The few wealthy men among them expended their money in the summer time at Saratoga. There was no public opinion brought to bear to restrain them from any sort of life in which they might choose to indulge at the National Capital. General Cass, for example, a wealthy man, had rooms in a building on the avenue that wicked correspondents said had prostitutes up-stairs and negroes in the cellar. This, however, was not put to print, for correspondents were few and timid. The fact is, Washington City belonged to the Government, and at that time subordinated the newspapers as much as the newspapers now subordinate Washington. In those days, if an enterprising journalist ventured to criticise a public man, a public man armed with a club would appear next day in the gallery. Nowadays, if a representative is too severely criticised he invites his critic to a little supper at John Chamberlin's, and explains things over a bottle of wine. The bold Ben. Butler once remarked on the floor of the House that if a newspaper man pointed his finger at a member the member ran into a hole. Mere wealth

in those earlier days was laughed at, and well it might be. Washington City was a mud-hole in winter, and a cloud of dust in summer. Hacks stalled in the mire in the main avenue at one season, while at the other pulverized continents were whirled to and fro on every square by turbulent winds. The one man, and no other, Alec. Shepherd, had not come to change this unloved capital, as if by magic, through an expenditure of twenty millions, into the most beautiful city on the continent.

I was surprised and delighted, therefore, to find my new admiration surrounded by such luxury as his house presented. A good-looking mulatto boy opened the door, in answer to our ring, and we were at once ushered into the library, where we found Mr. Seward in a much-faded silk gown and old slippers, busily at work, assisted by two clerks. He received us cordially, but did not suspend his labor. He talked and wrote at the same time until dinner was announced. Without changing gown or slippers, he led the way, followed by his guests and clerks and proceeded at once to the business of dining. His family was not with him, so he took liberties with the meal that had in it all the ceremony to which the servants were accustomed.

Later in life I should have found Mr. Seward a charming conversationalist. Then, however, I was at the period of life when a man carries relics in his mind, and is apt to be tremendously in earnest. Mr. Seward was good-naturedly cynical. I was

shocked at the absence of seriousness, and swung over to a painful belief that my great man had no convictions, or rather no principles. He laughed at what I held sacred. I ventured to remark, for example, that his appeal to a higher law had caused great excitement.

"It was an imprudent speech," he said in reply, "and I ought to have been more careful."

"Not," I said, "if you believe it."

"My young friend," he said, "we are warned to keep to ourselves what we do not believe. It is as well, frequently, to conceal what we do believe. There is apt to be public damnation in both. We are all bound by tradition to the tail end of a paper kite called a Constitution. It is held up by a string that, one of these days, a wind, a little stronger than usual, will break, and then we shall all tumble."

I had been born and brought up to a belief in the Constitution that was second in sacred earnestness only to my belief in the truths of Holy Writ.

"Why, Mr. Senator," I said in some heat, "you certainly do not believe that of our Constitution?"

"I certainly do," he replied, "but I generally keep it to myself. A written Constitution is a superstition that presupposes certain impossibilities. The first is that it can express all the wisdom of the past, and anticipate all the wants of the future. It supposes that its creators were both saints and sages. We have had those two classes, but never the two

qualities united in one class. The saints were not sages, and the sages were not saints."

I broke into a hot defence of the sacred instrument, to which he listened very politely, and, when I ended, said abruptly:

"That is in your blood; you are a Huguenot by descent, and all your opinions are convictions. I knew a relation of yours, once, John H. Piatt. He gave a large fortune to the support of the Government, in the war of 1812, and in consequence died in prison, where he was held for debt. You see your uncle was a patriotic saint, but he was not a sage; however," he added, "we will not let loose our opinions, for nothing makes a devotee so mad as to pull the stuffing out of his god, and we never can succeed by making people mad."

In my youthful impetuosity, I forced the cynical Senator back to a consideration of the, then to me, sacred Constitution. With some signs of slight irritation, he said, and his words proved so strangely prophetic that the slight impression made then has since deepened into wonder:

"This Constitution is to us at the North a great danger. While we are devoting ourselves to it as a sacred ark of covenant we lose sight of the fact that the Southerners are using it as a shield to cover their wicked designs. They are laying the foundation for a Southern Empire. It is their policy to use the Government of the United States in an acquisition of Cuba, and they will stretch that Constitution to its

furthest limit for the extension of slave territory. When these things are done it will be good-by Union, and we can hold them to their allegiance by no appeal to that sacred instrument, but only by an appeal to arms."

These opinions, specimens of which cling to my memory, gave me a distaste for my new found admiration. This was subsequently increased by the discovery that his opposition to slavery was based entirely upon his intellectual processes, and not upon his heart. He had no pity for the slave, and no dislike for the master. Indeed, he was a great favorite with the last named. He had contempt for them, however, which he concealed as carefully as he did his contempt for the Constitution. He began life as a school-teacher at the South, and had been treated with a condescending indifference by the unenlightened masters, the memory of which clung to him through life. He really looked down upon them in the same cynical way that he did upon their slaves. I wondered then that so able a man, such a profound student and clear-thinking philosopher should, with these cynical ways, have such a large popular following. I learned afterward that I had seen only half the man; the other half was the intriguing, popular, successful man of affairs, Thurlow Weed. How these two dissimilar characters came to be united illustrates the real greatness of William H. Seward. Such unions of unlike qualities in two men, joined as one, have been and

are known in France, but nowhere else. Indeed, so far as we are concerned, there has been no second William H. Seward, and no reproduction of Thurlow Weed.

William H. Seward had all the higher qualities of statesmanship. Of a delicacy of temperament that indicated genius, he possessed a mind of rare power, which he filled with vast stores of information through patient and impartial study. His mind was singularly suggestive, and sustained by a courage and industry that moulded these suggestions into measures of legislation highly beneficial to the people he served.

Our land is prolific of politicians, and strangely barren of statesmen. The difference between the two classes is strongly marked. The politician follows, the statesman leads. The one is the guide, philosopher, and friend of humanity. The other is the servant. The fact that we have our Government reduced to writing in a few simple rules makes it easy for a common man to aid in its administration. If he is careful to study the passions and prejudices of his fellow-citizens, and to always utter with intense solemnity the platitudes of popular truths, he can claim any office, and so serve his constituents as to live beloved and die lamented.

With the statesman the task is more difficult. He must not lead so far in advanee as to be lost sight of, nor lead too directly in the direction of which the popular mind may not approve. The man of all time

who combined the cunning shrewdness of the politician with the powers of statesmanship was Abraham Lincoln. As President controlling Stanton and Chase, he made these eminent men popularly successful, and the only great man in his Cabinet who could win without his aid was Mr. Seward. This eminent diplomat seemed to have recognized his own defects that stood in the way to popularity at an early day, and remedied these by making Thurlow Weed a part of himself.

No life of Seward is complete without including the bad side of the statesman. Born and bred in New York, Thurlow Weed inhaled from his earliest youth the atmosphere of political intrigue that famous leaders, such as Hamilton and Burr, had developed there in advance of all other parts of the United States. The governing element that exists in the masses under a republic was first felt and utilized in that prosperous State, and at an early day politicians put in practice the Jeffersonian doctrines that were only theory in Virginia, where they had birth.

Thurlow Weed, a man of no learning but of keen instincts, had a knowledge of human nature, made perfect through its low but correct estimate of average humanity. The student of books, who learns to attribute intellectual motives to human action, instead of learning the currents that sway through the impulses of passion, of which impulses ignorant prejudice is the most potent, finds himself alone and at a loss when dealing with the masses. History, which

is made up of the stories of dead kings and famous captains, is to such student a snare and a delusion. Nor is this remedied by a study of literature, where a motive is assigned to every act for dramatic effect. If the delver in libraries would pause to consider himself, and learn from such study how much of his own life was made up of impulse, that had no origin in reason, and how far moulded by influences over which he had no control, he would have a light thrown upon his studies not to be obtained from other sources.

William H. Seward seemed to realize this when he allied himself to Thurlow Weed, and the cunning, unscrupulous leader of men readily accepted the advantages offered him through a partnership with genius and learning. That man is great who can use the brains of others to carry on his work. The leader who finds himself swamped in details had better throw up his leadership, for he has undertaken the impossible. No event in Seward's career shows such ability as this life-long partnership with Weed. He turned over to his subordinate the work he could not do, and it proved the work that built his pedestal, and gave him the power that comes through official position.

Political life to an American citizen has all the fanaticism of religion and all the fascination of gambling. At that early day politics had not yet crystallized into two hostile camps that differ from each other only in name and the possession of the

offices, and the first popular impulse seized on by Weed was that which made war on the Masons.

One looks back in wonder at a deadly antagonism to a secret order which had given proof of its purity and bond for its good behavior in the many great and good men, from Washington down, who had prided themselves on being members. But such war against the order was a fact, and on that war Seward rode into power. Weed availed himself of that popular prejudice, although one can well see that had Masonry been the selfish, wicked organization claimed, Weed himself would have seized on it to further his own questionable ends, and appeared before the world as an honored and accepted Mason.

An event, difficult now to comprehend, or explain, occurred about that time to give venom and force to the attacks on the order. A renegade Mason published a book purporting to give the secrets and ceremonies of this ancient body. Shortly after this publication the author, Morgan, disappeared from earth. It was claimed that he had been kidnapped and murdered by Masons, and wrath and horror drove the populace insane. To avow one's self a Mason then was to imperil one's life. All New York seemed to resolve itself into a detective corps, and details were developed that added fuel to the fire already kindled in the excited popular mind. The body of a man in a state of unrecognizable decay, and which was believed to be that of the perjured Morgan, was fished from the lake. Weed and his followers accepted the

find, and it was said of him that he remarked, when told that the body could not be that of Morgan, "It is a good enough Morgan to serve until after the election." Weed died denying this, and his denial will be accepted by the more thoughtful. While true to reputation, it was not true to fact. Weed was too cunning, too cautious, to be guilty of any such indiscretion. He was not one of those weak characters, naturally good, who seek to appear clever by seeming bad. He posed through life as a man of lofty virtue. Perhaps he deceived himself in this, and really believed that while he was not a perfect example of goodness, he was far better than the average man. This is not uncommon with such actors, and some deceive the world; the majority only succeed in deceiving themselves.

That war on Masonry is now recognized as a fool's fight. Morgan's book, that sold through so many editions as a revelation, now convinces a man not a member of the order that either Masons have no secrets of sufficient importance to justify killing in case of betrayal, or that the book is a lie, for Morgan fails to give the awful secret of the ancient order. One reads in amusement the so-called revelation, that goes on like a tread-mill from page to page in weary labor to the end without getting the reader up to or within the hidden horror.

Seward seems to have taken no note of Weed's means, but accepted the results without question. These means made our statesman Governor of New

York, Senator, a prominent candidate for a presidential nomination, and, eventually, Secretary of State.

How far the able diplomat was conscious of his other half's wrong-doing it is difficult to ascertain. One unacquainted with the facts reading Weed's memoirs will close the book impressed with the belief that, as between Seward and Weed, the last named was the more virtuous of the two. The same cunning duplicity may have deceived Seward. One doubts this. The diplomatic statesman of the war was too great a man to be thus defrauded.

How unscrupulous Weed was in all financial affairs the writer of this has reason to remember. He took part in that opening disaster of the war known as the First Bull Run. He is cognizant of a fact that goes far to account for our defeat, and which seems to have escaped the notice of our war historians. That fact is that defective arms were put in the hands of the poor fellows who so bravely marched out to a cruel slaughter.

When the war burst so unexpectedly upon the Government at Washington, to arm and equip even seventy-five thousand men made a problem difficult of solution. It takes time to manufacture guns, and this necessary time our authorities could not command. It was sought to purchase in Europe, and, as a consequence, we marched from camp at Centreville to find and whip the enemy armed, mainly, with muskets bought abroad. Our gallant men found locks breaking and barrels bursting with far more

danger to themselves than to the enemy we assailed. I remember that at the assault at Blackburn's Ford George Wilkes and, I believe, General Baird or General Fry, I forget which, assisted by others, rallied a number of the stragglers from the fight as they poured along the road to the rear. One of the gallant West Pointers remonstrated with the retreating volunteers. "Well, give us guns we can shoot, and we'll fight," said one of the men.

An impromptu inspection followed, and out of twenty muskets only one was found in a serviceable condition. These were Belgian muskets, purchased, it was said, through the agency of Weed and Sandford, *and were condemned guns* bought of the contractor, after condemnation, by our patriotic agents.

Now I know, as the entire army knew, that these pot-metal semblances of guns were utterly worthless. Whether the story then told, and generally believed, that they came through the agency of Weed and Sandford is true, I do not know, but it is not too late to investigate. Weed is dead, but Simon Cameron, then Secretary of War, and Henry Sandford are yet alive. It behooves them, at least, to make denial.

This is a serious charge, and I must not be considered its author. It was made on the field of battle by men with the worthless arms in their hands, by the side of the dead and dying. It is hard to believe that, in the hour of deadly peril to the nation, the brave fellows who volunteered to fight

were made the victims of a treachery that discounts treason, in its greed for money stained with the heart's blood of the patriots called to the front. Camp-followers rob the dead, and, it is said, sometimes murder the wounded. These are fiends in human shape, but they are saints by the side of the cold-blooded, selfish scoundrels, who, with the roar of the deadly strife sounding in their ears, swindled the Government through spoiled food, rotten shoddy, and useless arms for the men who tendered their lives in behalf of their flag and country.

Should an investigation be had, I have but one fact to offer, and that is one well known to the survivors of the First Bull Run, that we lost the battle mainly through worthless muskets. Who purchased the condemned guns, and who pocketed the tainted money, I do not know, I only serve notice on Simon Cameron and Henry Sandford that they, with Thurlow Weed, were charged with the crime.

Thurlow Weed was the pioneer of the horde of plunderers that fattened on our Government in the woeful hour of peril. While thousands on thousands marched to the front and made tender of their patriotic lives to the Republic in its time of need, these men hurried to the rear, to the sound of the enemy's guns, to fatten on the spoils the struggle made available. And when the fight was over, they robbed us of our victory by showing to the world that we had grown in our war a more deadly enemy to self-government than the armed

host we had conquered in the field. At the end of nearly a century, they made the Republic more of a doubtful experiment than when the Fathers launched it out of the Revolution. They who were despicable thieves in the beginning were respectable millionaires at the end, and the equality of political rights secured by the Fathers is rendered of no avail by the inequality of property that, hedged in by law, strengthened by monopoly, and made perpetual through corporations, gives us the same woes that for ages have held labor to a condition of unrequited toil in Europe, where one class that produces all enjoys nothing, while another class that produces nothing enjoys all.

For nearly a century the best government under the sun, founded on the proposition that all men are born equal, held four millions of blacks in abject slavery. The convulsion that freed us from this shameful inconsistency resulted in a corrupt dominion of money that has so degraded our civil service, that to elect an official is to commission a thief, and the Republic, which should be a model and an example to all humanity, is a by-word and a reproach.

This recognition of a melancholy fact has carried me some distance from Wm. H. Seward, and I am glad that it is so. Knowing this eminent man intimately, and studying his character and career from a strictly impartial standpoint, I can well hope that it is possible to make his purity consist with his Weed partnership. I know that, as I have ad-

mitted, this is difficult, and, to a casual observer, seems impossible; but I am satisfied that it can be done. Seward, with his delicate organization and keen, suggestive mind, had trained himself in the traditions of a past which taught its disciple that worldly wickedness indicated ability. To be bad was to be clever. The Fathers of our Government received from Europe the doctrine held among leaders, that innocence was not only Utopian, but an indication of weakness, and so practised lives in imitation of their models that had in them more of sin than usefulness. A devotion to wine, women, and infidelity gave proof of superior intellect, while the Walpolian maxim that every man has his price made the then estimate of humanity. That such characters in our immortal patriots fail to reach us, and that we have scant knowledge of such traits in them, is due to the fact that the masses of the revolutionary era were more virtuous than their leaders, and that on these leaders' tombs we have recorded, "Not what they were, but what they should have been." If my reader doubts this let him study carefully the private life of the greatest saint, in popular estimation, of that day. I refer to Alexander Hamilton, the friend of Washington, and the so-called martyr slain by Burr.

I have no thought of asserting in this that William H. Seward was at all a bad man. With no turn for women, and no taste for wine, he neither gambled nor stole. He affected a wickedness he did not feel,

because such affectation was, in his estimation, good form in a statesman. Had an evil act been proposed to him, he would not have resented the proposal because it was bad, but for that it was insulting. Of refined, gentlemanly instincts and high training, he was willing to condone in others practices not for a moment to be tolerated in himself. No man, for example, could denounce the sin of slavery with more power than he, and yet no Abolition leader was so intimate and popular with slave-holders as our distinguished diplomat. Thurlow Weed was to Seward a breakwater that kept the ruder and more vulgar features of political corruption from his sight. He knew all this. Riding in the calm security of his quiet life, he heard, without seeing or being disturbed, the ugly waves beyond. Among the sober, earnest men of the Abolition faith with whom he acted he was regarded as insincere. His intimacy with and friendship for the fire-eaters of the South added to the suspicion, and his light cynical tone in treating of all topics made the hot-gospellers of the Anti-Slavery Army more than doubt him.

We begin life with the discovery that all good things are dull, and we too generally end in considering all dull things good. Not only this, but to convince others, one must prove one's self an earnest believer. This is not consistent with a cynical or light treatment of the faith. There was a Judas who betrayed, but not a jester who amused among the apostles.

This is not touching on the shrewd observation of Tom Corwin, of Ohio, that the world has a contempt for the man that amuses it. A cynical, philosophical mind like Seward's might, and probably did, scorn to amuse and create distrust. The contempt was all on one side. He had a way of not only looking through shams, even earnest emblems of something held sacred by the popular mind, but of tearing off the outside and exposing the bran stuffing of an idol. For example, I met him the day after the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation, and complimented the Administration upon the paper.

"Yes," he said, "we have let off a puff of wind over an accomplished fact."

"What do you mean, Mr. Seward?"

"I mean that the Emancipation Proclamation was uttered in the first gun fired at Sumter, and we have been the last to hear it. As it is, we show our sympathy with slavery by emancipating slaves where we cannot reach them, and holding them in bondage where we can set them free."

With these unpopular qualities, Seward would never have worked to the front and become a leader of men but for this partnership with Thurlow Weed. Possessed of more force of character than intellect, Thurlow Weed made up in cunning all he lacked in brain. His opinions were convictions so long as they harmonized with the majority, and on that majority depended his earnestness in their utterance. He realized at an early day that nothing so offends

as unpopular views, and he made it a point never to offend in that way. As he had no views of his own, this was easy. He felt that if Seward knew less he would be more successful, and would have dissolved the partnership or never entered into it but for the fact that some brain and a little culture were necessary in the political field of New York. The masses had not yet learned to disregard intellect in their leaders, and the memories of Hamilton, Burr, De Witt Clinton, and the influence of Van Buren, Silas Wright, Marcy, and other statesmen, was yet upon them. Thurlow Weed, with his peculiar shrewdness, turned over to his co-worker all the honors of office, while retaining to himself all the emoluments that came from success. He realized the fact that there was but one man with whom he could harmonize in such work, and when poor Horace Greeley, whose brain and popular pen he and Seward had used for all they were worth, proposed taking to himself a little of the influence to be obtained from official recognition, the two gave the able editor to understand that they could not approve of any such ambitious design on the part of their editor. Horace Greeley, who to the ignorance and trusting simplicity of a child added a strange power of persuasion with his pen, could not understand that he was disqualified for office because he knew too much, and could not be controlled by the two for whose information on any subject he had a profound contempt.

Thurlow Weed was as strange as Seward was remarkable. Tall, slender, awkward, and solemn, in his ways, he had a stoop in his shoulders that did not come from study of books, but from bending over in a confidential way to hear what others had to say. He was the most confidential man in manner I ever encountered. In my first interview with him, after an hour's talk on my part, I left impressed with his superior sagacity, until, in humility, I came to remember that I had done all the talking. He won men as a heartless belle wins lovers, through the use of his ears, and in this he had not only unwearied patience, but a confidential air that impressed his victim, as the belle does her admirer, with the belief that he was the only one in all the world in whom he thus confided. His manner, in this respect, was simply superb. He never spoke save in a subdued tone, as if he feared others might hear what he was very careful never to utter. The intense expression of his mysterious eyes, as he looked at and listened to his victim, discounted the fascination sung of in the Ancient Mariner. What can you do with a man who leads you to a remote corner of a room and, in the most deferential manner, tells you nothing in a low, confidential tone?

I find myself returning in this to Thurlow Weed. The truth is, the student of history delving in the facts necessary to a knowledge of our great diplomat, whose intellect, character, and position had so much to do with the preservation of the Republic,

cannot separate Seward from Weed. An old story illustrates how this stood. It tells us of Seward, when Governor of New York, trying to convince the driver of a stage-coach of the fact. The cunning old whip looked incredulously, from the corners of his fishy eyes, at the little hook-nosed man at his side, and gave expression to his belief that he had an escaped lunatic on the box. Seward, much amused and slightly irritated, cried out to an old friend and prominent politician standing upon the porch of a tavern before which the coach had drawn up:

"I say, Tom, tell this aged man of the reins that I am Governor of New York, or he will tumble me off."

"I won't tell any such lie, William."

"Sir," replied Seward, "do you mean to say that I am not?"

"Certainly I do."

"Who is, then?"

"Thurlow Weed, of course." A roar of laughter from the inside testified to the wit of the sally, which was good because so ludicrously true.

Weed made a great success of his cleverly organized machine in New York, and he secured Seward upon the pedestal at Washington, where his brilliant parts won him a national reputation. At Chicago, however, Weed's management proved Seward's defeat when the attempt was made to nominate New York's favorite as the candidate of the newly-organized party. Seward was undoubtedly the leading

aspirant for the nomination, and would have been more popular than Lincoln at the polls. This because the great body of voters to be relied on were old Whigs. This political organization was, in its day, eminently respectable and conservative. Its voters knew Seward, and while distrusting him, they had not the fear they felt when called on to support a low, vulgar rail-splitter of Illinois. He, Lincoln, was supported by the vile Abolitionists whom they considered cranks, possessed of no regard whatever for our national progress and high business interests.

This would have nominated Seward had not Weed, to overcome the outside pressure at Chicago, imported a body of roughs from New York City to roar down the Illinois crowd. These bully-grog bruisers were then new to conventions, and they frightened and offended the men they were intended to influence. The writer of this had been selected as a delegate to the Convention, and, although cheated out of his seat, made a part of the Chase contingent from Ohio. Our headquarters were next to those of the Seward people from New York, and I well remember the deep disgust expressed for the vulgar, noisy, drunken crowd that hurrahed, till hoarse, for Seward. The Republican party was then new, and influenced, if not led, by the thoughtful, true-hearted Abolitionists, and the entire Convention, with the exception of this Seward element, approached the duty devolving upon it in the prayerful spirit of men who felt that grave issues were in their hands.

The first ballot placed Seward and Lincoln in the lead, nearly evenly balanced, and the conduct of the Seward claqueurs gave the majority to Lincoln. Weed was not to blame. His knowledge of human nature did not include the earnest, honest men who first came forward to lead a forlorn hope, and who were amazed and much distressed to find themselves, after the election, victors.

Fortunately for the country the newly-elected President called to his Cabinet the two great men, Seward and Chase, who had contended in the Convention for the honor he had so strangely won.

This was Providence, that gave us the advantage from the start; especially was it so in the case of Seward. Of all the eminent men brought to the front in that revolution, William H. Seward was the only one who looked down the confused and darkened future with the eye of a prophet. He alone, from his superior knowledge of the South, saw that we stood upon the crumbling precipice of a terrible civil war, and what he did, through superior intelligence, and what his associates did through ignorance, saved to us the Capital, and, through that salvation, the Union itself.

Looking back over those hours pregnant with startling events, the student of history marvels at the stupidity of the South in permitting the inauguration of Lincoln at Washington. The seat of government was in the enemy's country, and why it should have been abandoned to the North is difficult

to comprehend, until we get at the reason for the fact, when it is simple enough. The leaders of the South could no more be made to believe that the people of the North would fight, than our leaders could be convinced that the South meant war, and in addition to this, the men who appealed to arms to enforce their secession were satisfied that if the appeal ever came to any such bloody issue, the Democrats of the North would not only side with them, but take up arms in their behalf. This received sanction in the pitiful and prayerful appeals from Democrats in the free States to their brethren in the South to spare the Union, as if the fate of the nation trembled in the hands of the lordly slaveholders.

Abraham Lincoln could not be made to realize the existence of the gathering storm. He would not admit that the masses could be aroused to a bloody war against their brothers upon a mere abstract political proposition, such as States' Rights, as if that had anything to do with the civil conflict. Had he not made the argument, and won his cause, in that famous war of words between Douglas and himself? States' Rights was a worn-out superstition at the best, but he relied mainly on his assertion that no people ever got up and went to killing on an abstract proposition. Other eminent men of our side held that the South had no resources. "They will have to come to us for arms without money to pay for them," said Hannibal Hamlin; "and for coffins," added John P. Hale. "To put a regiment in the

field costs more than the income of an entire Southern State," said Mr. Speaker Banks; and so, while Jeff. Davis calmly waited for Virginia to pass her ordinance of secession, with no protection for our national capital save General Winfield Scott and the Marine Band, the President gave his days and nights to selecting office-holders for the positions from which the Democrats, much to their surprise and disgust, were being dismissed. The unbelieving North made no preparations, and the South only such as it thought necessary to enforce the popular cry of, "Let the erring sisters depart in peace."

Mr. Seward feared that the South would begin at the beginning, and, seizing on the Capital, prevent the inauguration of the President elect. To prevent this he gave adhesion to the belief then prevalent, as I have said, that there would be no armed conflict. He desired to see the representatives from the revolting States leave Washington in peace. To this end he made his famous conciliation speech in the Senate, which, while deluding the Confederate leaders into a sense of security, disappointed and disgusted the radical men at the North. The wrathful chiefs of the turbulent South were lulled into a belief in Northern non-resistance, and left fully convinced that on their first armed demonstration, and perhaps before, they would be invited back to negotiate terms of separation. Indeed their only anxiety was in the fear that some sort of terms might be agreed on that would perpetuate the hated union. Their most

noted leader said, "If a blank sheet were given us upon which to write the terms on which we might remain, the sheet would be returned unstained by ink." They were more anxious to get the slave States committed to secession than they were to commit the North to any terms of abject submission. It was not their policy to fetch on an armed collision before a solemn compact had been entered upon, committing the slave States to a position their pride would force them to uphold, after once making it known to the world. Hence Jeff. Davis waited on Virginia's legislature, when he could have seized Washington with an armed mob of Virginians.

There is another fact to be kept in view, and that is that, so far as the war issues were concerned at home, Washington City was of small importance. Its loss would not, in the end, have affected the result. Our National Capital differed from the capitals in Europe in not being a great commercial centre, and had no significance beyond that which attaches to a place selected for a Government to meet and transact business that could have been quite as well carried on at any other point. The only effect of its loss would have been to arouse to greater wrath the loyal people of the free States. The effect on the governments of Europe, however, where our peculiar institutions were not clearly understood, would have been widely different and disastrous to our cause. It would have been taken to be as significant as the loss of London or Paris under like circumstances.

It is well for us that the stupid sense of security founded upon the belief that the North would not attempt coercion at the point of the bayonet, and the ignorance of our own Government, that made it regard the disturbance South as so much bluster, that would die out on the fact being demonstrated that the North was not to be intimidated by such political demonstrations and threats, prevented any movement looking either to the defence or the capture of the Capital. That there was no danger that any effort against the Capital would be made was the view taken by President Lincoln and all of his Cabinet, save William H. Seward.

Abraham Lincoln was duly inaugurated, a grand inauguration ball followed, and the President and Cabinet turned their attention to filling the offices from the immense horde that crowded Washington. Nor did they give any serious attention to the ordinances of secession being passed by the Southern States, or to the arming and drilling of troops until they were startled by the guns fired on Sumter, which sent a thrill throughout the loyal States, and brought a people to their feet in wrath that subjugation alone could appease.

President Lincoln tendered, and Mr. Seward accepted, the portfolio of the State Department. This was given the distinguished Senator, not because of any peculiar fitness he was known to possess for the position, but for that it was considered the highest place in the Cabinet; and Mr. Seward,

having received, next to Mr. Lincoln, the greatest vote in the Convention at Chicago, was thought, therefore, to be entitled to the place. In the same way Salmon P. Chase was assigned to the Treasury, and Simon Cameron to the War Department. All the prominent candidates for the Presidential nomination were thus provided for.

The State Department had been, before the war of 1861, a mere show place, and could have been wiped out without any great loss to our Government. Through all the Administrations, from that of Washington down to Buchanan, the Secretary of State had posed as a grave figure-head, possessed of a great name and little or no power. Our infant Republic, separated by wide seas from the nations of Europe, and not only separated from, but antagonized by, our form of government, saw no necessity for the delicate and complicated machinery that goes to make up state-craft, and so, while organizing a State Department, left that department without the power that gives it significance. Jealous of irresponsible and unguarded trusts, the framers of our Government confined the treaty-making power to the President and Senate. The President alone, nor the Senate alone, can commit the Government to any proposition in that direction, and the result is that all such covenants are negotiated for at Washington. The Secretary of State is powerless in this behalf, and the consequence is that we have been, and must ever remain, under our Consti-

tution, without a diplomatic corps such as exists and is recognized as necessary by European governments. We send gentlemen abroad under the imposing titles of Ministers, but they are in reality only clerks of the State Department, sort of Government Post-offices in Europe, where they play at being diplomats, much to the amusement of the able and polished gentlemen of the real diplomatic corps.

There is really no great loss in being deprived of a diplomacy that has come to be synonymous with duplicity, and presupposes evil designs to be met and overcome by evil practices. War in Europe has been defined by an eminent Russian statesman as disorganized diplomacy, and, as a rule, one is as iniquitous as the other. As we have no boundaries to be affected, no political or other rights to be endangered, our entire diplomacy can be reduced to the one axiom, promulgated by Secretary Marcy, of demanding nothing but the right, and submitting to nothing that is wrong. Ordinarily, under this state of fact, we can well dispense with the farce of sending to Europe our successful stump orators under the high-sounding titles of Envoys Extraordinary, Ministers Resident, or Chargé d'Affaires to disport themselves at courts in gold-embroidered garments, greatly to the amazement and entertainment of European statesmen.

There are, however, exceptions to all rules, and ours came when the South, in revolt, sent her ablest

men to Europe for the purpose of soliciting interference in her behalf. It was necessary to meet these advocates with a like array of eminent men from our side. This was the grave duty imposed on William H. Seward when he accepted the position of Secretary of State. He came to the place well equipped for the trust, and he had been trained through trial in high places to a quick use of all he possessed. Of a delicate, sensitive organization, he retained through intellectual acquirements all the lightning-like perceptions which we call, for lack of a better word, instinct; and to this he added the highest moral courage. How suggestive was his brilliant mind one can learn by a study of the many measures which, as a leader of his great State, he originated when that State was solidifying after the revolution into what it remains at this day. His mind and memory are impressed on many of the organic laws of New York that have since spread out through the Union over a continent. He first developed opposition to corporate monopolies, and if he failed to restrain altogether that monstrous evil from which the whole country now suffers, it was no fault of his. He, among the first, favored a system of public education. He was the advocate of public works, such as the enlargement of the Erie Canal, as well as other improvements in aid of the cheap distribution of products. He removed the onerous disabilities imposed upon foreigners. The reform in courts of law, since so generally copied by other

States, came from him. He suggested and carried to success a geological survey of the State. He got up a general banking system, and established asylums for the insane. To William H. Seward belongs the credit of abolishing the brutal and barbarous practice of imprisonment for debt, while he quieted effectually the great anti-rent war that at one time threatened the political and social life of his State.

The most marked and memorable event of this statesman's life, while Governor of New York, is to be found in the resistance he made to Virginia, when the Governor of that old Commonwealth made a demand on him to return to the courts of Virginia two sailors charged with abducting slaves. Mr. Seward took, and maintained with great ability, the ground that a crime made such by State law, that was not recognized as a crime at common law, could not be sustained outside the locality where such statutory provision existed. In this Governor Seward ignored the guarantees of the Constitution, "that compact with hell," as the Abolitionists designated the sacred instrument which, based on an equality of human rights, provided for the enforcement of the saddest form of human servitude. If the free States could be made to return fugitive slaves to their masters, then, under the recognized rule that laws carry in themselves all provisions necessary to their enforcement, the kidnappers of slaves could also be returned for punishment.

It is singular, looking back on those stirring times, to note that the Abolitionists were the strictest advocates of States' Rights, and went beyond Calhoun himself in subtle arguments to sustain that superstition of Colonial times which gave sovereignty not only to each separate Colony of the old thirteen, but extended the principle to the new States that were made by the General Government, very much as a State makes a county. Not only did the officials of New England, in common with Governor Seward of New York, claim a sacred soil equal to that of Virginia, but Governor Chase set up the same sort of sovereignty for Ohio. The absurdity of all this became yet more apparent after the war opened, when the powers at Washington had to rely upon war governors for troops, while the seceded States resolved themselves into a military despotism, with its acknowledged head at Richmond.

Mr. Seward entered upon his duties as Secretary of State with a clear head and high courage. One reads the many-volumed despatches from his pen to our agents abroad during those four years with mingled amazement and admiration, not unmixed with pity. There is a precision and clearness in these state papers unsurpassed at home or abroad in like documents, and there is a calm conservative tone indicative of a courage that he who reads between the lines, by the light of the terrible events then being enacted, knows had little foundation in fact. The great impending danger to a cause that carried in its

bosom the existence of empire was foreign interference, and we know that every line of these brave utterances was penned with a sinking heart. Had the smallest power of Europe recognized the Confederacy, not only would the greatest war power, that of France, have immediately intervened, but such recognition would have made available the millions ready for investment in King Cotton and his empire. Louis Napoleon, the imbecile, who so long masqueraded in the garb of the Little Corporal, and with such fatal effect, not only openly avowed himself ready to accept the new political organization of the South, but backed her emissaries in their appeals to England for a like avowal.

The novel Congress, made up mainly of representatives from the free States, in its unpatriotic greed, instead of aiding the sorely perplexed Administration, threw the deadliest obstacles in the way of the Secretary of State. The war was unpopular in Europe because of the cotton famine that followed its beginning, from our blockade of Southern ports, and while the Confederacy was offering free trade, our Congress seized on the opportunity presented by the absence of Southern representatives to enact the highest tariff ever imposed upon an intelligent people. The insolence of this challenge to all the world was only equalled by its stupidity. We not only wantonly offended the powers upon whose inaction depended our existence as a nation, but at a time when we needed the greatest income from cus-

toms to carry on the war, we ran up a Chinese wall of prohibition against income that was only surmounted by a loss of credit and a consequent fall of value in our currency. The augmentation of prices to the foreign importer overrode our prohibition. This was the statesmanship of our leaders in Congress that well-nigh proved fatal to the Republic.

Secretary Seward penned his brave sentences amid the drift of wrecked armies that floated back upon the Capital through which they had marched to martial music, rising and falling upon the wide avenues like the waves of a resistless sea, and he heard for nearly two years the brief tales of shameful disasters, broken in all that time by only one victory gained in the West under the leadership of the only great man under epaulets, the man whose name was destined to be associated with victories alone. The name of George H. Thomas sounded in his ears like the trump of the archangel awakening the dead to an immortal resurrection. The small creatures that pecked at great events beyond their ability to compass sneered at Seward's continued assertions that the trouble would end in ninety days. They little dreamed that this was meant for far-off shores, where it had potent influence among men ignorant of the serious effects of the disasters that made up the record of our unavailing efforts. To the same end he encouraged public amusements, and stimulated the wife of the President to gayeties at the Execu-

tive Mansion, where the sound of revelry failed to drown the cry of defeat.

We can well understand now why the nephew of his uncle sought to aid the Confederacy in its evil designs, for after his attempt through Mexico to destroy our Government he was ignominiously snuffed out at Sedan. Then the world opened its stupid eyes to the fact that Napoleon le petit had not even sense enough to be a successful charlatan. The imperial robes of the great man whose Napoleonic dynasty he burlesqued had not, at the date of our war, collapsed into a heap of rags, and the poor actor who wore them was not only a terror to our Secretary, but to all Europe. It was not then known that his empire was a mere shell, honeycombed with rot that enriched the little rogues who bowed before him to the utter destruction of all power. We now learn from those state papers that while Louis Napoleon openly avowed his malign designs against our Republic, his diplomatic agents at London were insidiously at work upon the English ministry in an effort to perfect an alliance that would join these two great war powers in fatal hostility to our cause.

The British Government failed the French Emperor, but we have no cause to be thankful for any kindly feeling toward us, or any sense of justice on the part of our cousins. They were animated by no high principle nor any feeling of sympathy. Mr. Seward, realizing this, caught up and used only

appeals to the selfish interests of the shop-keepers, whose business dominated not only official action in affairs at home, but the world over. The English Ministry saw a few Confederate cruisers sweep our commerce from the seas, and knew well that, in case of war, Yankee privateers would, in turn, destroy their entire mercantile marine, and so turned a deaf ear to the diplomatic pleadings of their ally. While our Secretary presented officially, with as much point and clearness as polite diplomatic language would allow, the interests of the English in the premises, he sent among the merchants and manufacturers of England men who could talk openly and with force upon the issues likely to arise should war be declared. Two of these, the Rev. H. W. Beecher and Archbishop Hughes, were men of surpassing ability, and this ability the Secretary supplemented with the cunning of Thurlow Weed. The three did effective work, and England not only left the Confederacy to its fate, but, through her example, held harmless the hands of the imperial imbecile of France.

It was, however, while Europe, restrained by England, hung threateningly upon our horizon that an event occurred that well-nigh proved fatal to us. A stupid naval officer boarded a British merchantman and took from her decks two Confederate emissaries, Messrs. Mason and Slidell. This at any time was cause enough for war. Our Administration was shocked and startled, and yet Secretary

Seward entered upon the discussion of the affair as calmly as if we were in a condition to enforce any rights that might make a side for us in the diplomatic conflict. He knew that there was nothing for us but a humiliating return of the emissaries, and an apology for the so-called outrage. Our naval officer had traversed our own doctrine of the sacred character of our decks at sea that led to the war of 1812, while England's indignation was in direct antagonism to what England had practised for a thousand years in her claimed right of search. The unhappy Secretary admitted the wrong, and our Government ordered restitution, not because we recognized the violation of international law, in thus forcibly abducting enemies from the decks of a power with which we were at peace, but for that our captain did not seize the vessel itself, and bring it into port for a trial of the offenders. From the opening of the despatch to its close Mr. Seward argued against our side with subtle ingenuity, and made his conclusion so obvious that there was not much loss of dignity in his graceful retreat.

So, through the grave crisis of our fate, this great man served his fellow-men to the triumphant end. Unseen, all-seeing, he and his fellow-laborers at Washington shaped our work, directed our energies, and guarded us from peril. Then, when the task was ended, quietly retired, making no claim for recognition, asking no reward other than that which

came of conscious power and a conscientious discharge of duty.

How discouraging to the student of history to see men so great neglected, their services unrecognized, their work unknown, while epauletted creatures, upon whose imbecility rests the responsibility of uncalled-for carnage that spread mourning and cruel desolation over all the land, are rewarded in life and honored to immortality in death. Had it not been for the bullet of Booth, that shocked the masses into a recognition of Lincoln, the greatest man of all our age would have shared the fate of Stanton, Chase, and Seward, and gone down to a forgotten grave, amid the roar of artillery that told of the burial of men the earth were better had they never been born.

In the heart of New York, a bronze statue of heroic size has been erected to the memory of New York's greatest statesman. It will darken into slow decay, as his memory fades into oblivion without probably one of the busy millions knowing that, for four years, nothing stood between that great commercial centre and the utter ruin of a bombardment but the subtle intellect and patriotic heart of that one man. Without a navy, possessed of no coast defences, our cities on the sea were at the mercy of the weakest naval power of Europe.

In all this I detract nothing from the fame of Lincoln. Seward was a greater man in one thing, but not in all things, than Abraham Lincoln; and

were we the enlightened people we claim to be, the great Secretary's name would live along the pages of our history as that of one whose cultured mind, indomitable will, high courage, and pure patriotism, made a debt we were proud to acknowledge, thus honoring ourselves in honoring him.

## MAJOR-GENERAL GEORGE H. THOMAS.

THE intellectual qualities which go to make a successful military man are not of the highest order. Indeed, if we analyze the forces which are brought into play, we are driven to the conclusion that military success is more a matter of temperament than of intellect. The man of action cannot well be a man of thought, for the last quality embarrasses if it does not destroy the first. To be prompt to act on a given emergency, with that implicit confidence in one's self that inspires confidence in others, is a trait not in harmony with the studious, considerate use of one's judgment which creates distrust and doubt when one should have quick, decisive action.

Of all the great captains memorized in bronze and marble from the earliest historic period, two only are noted as men of thought. One of them was Julius Cæsar, the other the great Napoleon. The rest when called upon to act in other capacity than that of killing successfully exhibit pitiable failure.

If the subject of this article were only to be regarded as a successful general I would not be found

*(Bronze Statue in Washington.)*

GENERAL GEO. H. THOMAS.

UNIV. OF MICH.

*(Bronze Statue in Washington.)*

GENERAL GEO. H. THOMAS.

putting his achievements to record. But he held in himself a strange compound of thoughtfulness and action, and in this respect he towers above his associates in arms. He would have been great in any useful pursuit of life, and in the line on which circumstances called him to act, he is the man about whom clusters all the military glory of a civil conflict on either side to which we, as a people, can point with pride. Quiet and unassuming, he did his duty—a duty that saved, as much as one man could save, the great republic, and then as quietly sought his grave, leaving his great deeds his only monument. He left no memoirs, those button-holding pertinacities in print, in which small men, in small ways, beg to be regarded as great creatures, but, folding his cloak about him, gave the world freedom of opinion as to what he had accomplished in behalf of humanity, and laid down to moulder in his unmarked grave.

George Henry Thomas was a Virginian through several generations. As he was of English origin on one side, and French on the other, he should, if there is anything in heredity, have had the dash of the one and the staying power of the other; at least these are national traits which we attribute to these races with the same childlike faith in which we attribute ill-temper to red hair, and deceit to the female possessors of bead-like black eyes. Thomas' biographer, as he is dealing with a Virginian, fetches in the English Cavaliers, very much as all negro-

tinted skins of that great commonwealth fall back on Pocahontas.

The early settlers of our continent were hard-working and, let us hope, honest laborers, and if any of noble blood found refuge here they came, with a few exceptions, as criminals escaping conviction or as convicts escaping punishment. The great Virginia, home of the Cavaliers, was for a period a penal colony.

The haste in which we seek to dishonor the graves of our ancestors is pitiable. All the parade of imaginary pedigrees and emblazoned coats-of-arms, stolen from families fallen into decay, shame us as a people. That our honored forefathers braved the dangers of an unknown sea, the perils and hardships of the howling wilderness; that they with indomitable will and through hard labor conquered a continent, and changed the wild cry of animals and the yell of Indians into the hum of busy life—a waste into a garden—is of more honor to us, their descendants, than if we could trace back our lineage to robber barons whose only mission on earth was to torture and destroy.

George Henry Thomas had none of this false pride in his nature. He was wont to tell with glee how, when he a boy, he made a saddle for himself, which his father was not able to purchase, by watching the saddler day after day construct one, he following at home the lesson learned at the shop until the saddle was completed. That he would have

made a first-class mechanic we can well believe, for he had that in him which would have insured success in any walk of life.

### HIS YOUTH.

The early youth of our man was as quiet and uneventful as his later years were full of tumult and stirring events. He retained to the last that quiet self-poise which reminds one of the eagle balancing his pinions on the storm-cloud while all else is in the hurried confusion of seeming destruction.

The home life of old Virginia, in its patriarchal simplicity, was exceedingly beautiful. One acquainted with it can picture the quiet old mansions gleaming white amid their oaks, rude enough in their architecture, but so home-like in their calm. Generations of intermarriage had made all akin, while the ties of family strengthened the domestic bond that found something nearer and dearer to live for than the mere pursuit of wealth. Their homes were full of sweet human gossip, and proud, yet kindly, they lived out the quiet lives of brave men and chaste women in striking contrast to the money-getting world around them.

Whether it is our peculiar climate, or some other subtle cause, that develops the nerves at the expense of all else, we are a restless, moving race without that sense of home which so distinguishes Virginians. We are Arabs in boots and our resting-places in life are no better than tents, giving us

shelter, and wanting in all those sweet associations that make of a locality a fairyland. And yet in the home itself is planted all that makes a people really great. In it a mother's love and a father's care train good citizens, and give stability to government that is secured by no other process. We are enthusiastic over common schools and public institutions and firmly determined to make the pedagogue do the duty of the parent. We build houses, not for homes, but as show places, to sell and build again. Our very cemeteries are public parks, in which the sacred memories of the beloved dead are lost in the exhibition of grand avenues and costly monuments. We cart our wealth to the verge of the unknown land and leave its evidence to the living in a stunning monument. The mourners hurry back to business to keep the dead man's notes from protest. How this sort of life is marring our destiny as a people is manifest in the frightful increase of insanity and crime.

The perfect and beautiful influences of home life as practised in old Virginia make one of the noticeable incidents of the late civil conflict. Virginia, the cradle of patriots, presidents, and statesmen, was not remarkable for either her wealth or intellectual life. No authors were born to her; no books were made; no millionaires larded the lean earth with their ill-gotten gains; but the standard of manhood was on an average so high, the love and respect for the old commonwealth so strong, that

the entire war centred around her capital. The States that had thrown off the Union on a plea of State sovereignty immediately crystallized into a solid government with its head at Richmond, and when Virginia fell the cause was lost.

I have dwelt upon this subject because in the home training of George Henry Thomas may be found so much that in subsequent years made him famous. He was a man of such sterling integrity, so frank, brave, and truthful, so tender in his nature, generous in his impulses, so sensitive to the calls of honor, and so true to duty, that we are forced back to the early years when such qualities are impressed upon the plastic nature of youth. What a mother, what a father General Thomas must have possessed!

All boys are born liars because lying is the consequent result of weakness—the diplomatic refuge of helplessness. There is no moral training in a school. The popular superstition which tells us that teaching a child from books elevates its nature, and is all that is called for in the way of training, is curing itself through the most costly of learning, that of experience. We have got far enough along to realize that the majority of criminals inflicting humanity are educated criminals.

George H. Thomas had graduated at the Southampton Academy and had entered upon the study of law when the genial John Y. Mason offered Mr. Rochelle, George's uncle, a cadetship at West Point.

The choice of the place was left to the young man and promptly accepted.

Having passed the examination, George returned home by way of Washington to thank the Hon. John Y., then his member of Congress, for his kind patronage. The Hon. solon said to the youth: "No cadet appointed from our district has ever graduated at West Point, and if you fail I never want to see you again." He spoke to one whose lexicon had no such word as fail.

### WEST POINT.

This academy is a little school on the Hudson, popularly supposed to produce military men. As war is not a science, hardly an art, one is puzzled to know how it can be taught, and even if it could be, the learned professors would find themselves troubled, as all learned professors are, to create the mind necessary to apply the science after the teaching. Of a thousand pupils most admirably instructed in law or physic, one only is capable of using the information gained.

There is a popular superstition to the effect that in training one to habits of study, and an active use of the memory, mind is actually created, and of the thousand all are capable of being lifted to the same intellectual level. People cannot comprehend, nor be made to believe, that in any school the same inequality prevails that obtains in common life. The many are stupid, the few alone are

thoughtful. We are well aware of the fact that man may be taught all that science and art can contribute and yet remain a fool. It is not the accumulation of facts that gives intellectual power, but the ability to use the information so obtained.

There is a mystery in the public mind about West Point that would be ludicrous, did it not carry such grave consequences. It is believed that through some unknown and unknowable process of education the little academy graduates Napoleons every year. The ancient chestnut which tells us of the machine that takes in swine and turns out sausage has its parallel in what is believed of West Point. Raw youths, whose lack of natural ability would cause one to doubt the propriety of making them clerks in a country store, are captured by members of Congress, and in a few years graduate into office where the lives of men and perhaps the safety of the country depend on their ability.

The mystery is readily solved. There is nothing taught at West Point that differs from the teaching of any other academy of like pretensions save the training of the soldier, and therein lies the most ludicrous feature of the whole affair. There is nothing in the training of the soldier, however important and necessary it may be, that helps on or benefits the officer. After being taught to touch elbows, fire a gun, mount guard, and dig a ditch, the poor fellow is as far removed from what the academy claims to create as when he first began. He is nothing more nor less than

a drill-sergeant. As well asert that one must know how to shoe a horse as preliminary to riding as to claim that the drill of the private is necessary to the making of an officer, and in the duties of an officer, as I have said, there is no science. To march out, find the enemy, and fight him successfully has no rules which can be reduced to practice. General Halleck wrote a book on the art of war which was about as useful in a campaign as a treatise on infant baptism would have been, and when Halleck was called upon to practise what he taught, he imitated, in a feeble way, the great Napoleon, who conquered Europe by setting at naught all the wisdom of the schools. And the famous captain left but one axiom as the net purport and result of all his experience, and that is of no use to the average graduate, for it says, "The art of war is a calculation of chances."

In warlike Europe, save in England, a different system prevails. The war powers have been a thousand years in perfecting the private. Promotion from the ranks is kept open under the belief that actual service is a better school to graduate in than any academy. While the Government will undertake to make a private, the creation of the officer is left to the wisdom of God. The Almighty is no respecter of rank, and genius crops out in the most unexpected places. The great Napoleon claimed for his armies an irresistible morale, because, he said, every soldier felt that he carried the baton of a marshal in his knapsack. We exhaust our military

genius in the supposed creation of an officer. When that is done we point to the proud creature and say: "Behold our army." We have in ninety-nine out of a hundred cases graduated an incompetent. He is the natural result of a dull plodding nature and a good memory, and in this our little military institution does not differ from all other schools and academies the world over.

The process might be more of a success but for the fatal defect, lying at the foundation, of being built on the English system that has an aristocrat for an officer, and a servant, to use the mildest term, for a private. As we have no born aristocrats the school undertakes to create them. Of two boys taken from the same family, one may be trained at West Point into a superior being and the other made his dog. This is so clearly the fact that it is found impossible to get self-respecting Americans to enlist, and our regular army is made up of foreign-born creatures of the most degraded sort.

This feature alone would have been fatal to West Point, in the publicity it obtained during the late war, but for patronage it affords the Congressmen, aud we know how dear is official patronage to the ordinary solon. What we need to popularize West Point is a law requiring a graduate to serve one year in the field as a private, one year as a corporal, one year as a sergeant, and then, a seasoned soldier, he should be subject to a competitive examination before being commissioned.

What reason can be urged against thus bringing our own military school into harmony with the great principle of equality that underlies our Republic? The French system of comrades off duty and stern discipline in service is the true one for us. Especially is this so if we can elevate the rank and file without loss to the officer.

I have dwelt at some length in giving a view of West Point which will be new to many, and, probably unpopular with all, because in it lies the extraordinary success of our General. West Point taught him more than West Point intended to teach. George H. Thomas was slow of study—all thoughtful men are; he was not so eager to possess facts as to know the reasons for them, and as facts are abundant and of easy accumulation, and the reasons are few and obscure, the rapid accumulators of the first are many, and the philosopher a rare exception.

We can well imagine the deep-eyed, heavy-browed youth investigating, with painful care, all that was presented to him for study and thereby developing the thought processes that served him so well in after life. It was not what West Point taught him, but what West Point failed to teach, upon which he afterward graduated into greatness. The defects of the school first called his attention to more in our military system, and their study enabled him, while in the war, to call order out of chaos, and create an army that was irresistable in the field.

"The success of an army," he said to the late President Garfield, after the war, "depends more on the drill and discipline of the men than on the ability of their officers. Recognizing this, I applied myself to that from the start. What is the good of a hundred thousand men when you can fight only a thousand? Owing to a neglect of this and the lack of time necessary to apply the remedy we fought the late war with brigades and not with armies, and as the enemy was on the defensive and generally intrenched, we fought at a loss."

"Again," he said, "the brave men I drilled and cared for, the men whose confidence I won, made me all I can claim to be as a commander."

We shall see, as we progress, how strikingly true the above was, barring the modesty that eliminated his own clear intellect and force of character from the reasons for success.

## MEXICO.

In the invasion of Mexico Thomas was first called upon to exercise the military talent that his self-teaching at West Point had developed. The field afforded the young lieutenant of artillery was not wide, and save the record of a prompt discharge of duty, and quiet coolness under fire, there is nothing to indicate the high qualities which subsequently made him so conspicuous. He seems to have been of the command, under General Taylor, that first occupied the soil of Texas, and, subordinate to Major

Brown, made part of the garrison of the fort opposite Matamoras that for a week was besieged by the Mexicans. A fearful bombardment of five days resulted in the killing of Major Brown and one private. After this achievement the siege was raised in consequence of victories won by General Taylor at Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma.

Subsequently, in the battles about Monterey, he was brevetted captain for "gallant and meritorious services," and one General, J. P. Henderson, in his enthusiasm, goes so far as to say, after complimenting young Thomas and his men for their "bold advance," that "when ordered to retire he reloaded his piece, fired a farewell shot at the foe, and retired under a shower of bullets." George H. Thomas was a young man at the time when this extra shot was contributed to the poor Mexicans, and it may be that for once in his life he exhibited an impulse ever after so foreign to his nature. I am inclined to think, however, that the noble general of volunteers drew on his imagination for this one act of unordered audacity. The fame of the young officer, thus made conspicuous by General Henderson's account of "another shot" and the unpleasant "shower of bullets," reached the home of George, and the citizens thereof were considerably excited. A meeting was called at Jerusalem and Captain James Magil was selected to preside. "Colonel Wm. C. Parker rose," the rural press of that locality tells us, "and in his naturally eloquent and happy style proceeded to

deliver a spirit-stirring eulogy upon the character and conduct of our hero." He then proposed "the following resolutions, which were adopted by acclamation," and are so dignified and forcible that I copy them entire:

"*Resolved*, That whilst we glory in the unfailing fame which our heroic army in Mexico has acquired for herself and country, our attention has been especially drawn to the military skill, bravery, and noble deportment of our fellow-countryman, George H. Thomas, exhibited in the campaign of Florida, at Fort Brown, Monterey, and Buena Vista, in which he has given ample proof of the best requisites of a soldier—patience, fortitude, firmness, and daring intrepidity.

"*Resolved*, That as a testimonial of our high appreciation of his character as a citizen and a soldier, we will present to him a sword, with suitable emblems and devices, and that ——— be appointed a committee to collect a sum sufficient for the purpose, and cause to be fabricated a sword to be presented to the said George H. Thomas through the hands of his noble and heroic commander, Major-General Z. Taylor."

## THE WAR OF SECESSION.

Fourteen years after this presentation of a fabricated sword Thomas' neighbors, friends, and relatives were startled by his adhesion to the cause of the Government in the war which broke with such violence upon the country. Their grief was only rivalled by their wrath and indignation.

Much injustice has been done our general in reference to this act by both friends and foes. That one should charge him with offering his sword to the

Confederate authorities is as untrue as the claimed fact that he did not hesitate as to his course.

Thomas was a strange compound. He had not only a thoughtful turn, as I have said, but with this was joined a promptness of action that seems foreign, indeed antagonistic, to that quality. With great force of character he possessed a delicacy of organization that made him shrink, like a girl, from either praise or blame. While governed by a clear, high sense of duty, he felt keenly all the affectionate ties made part of him by his early training and home associations. That he fully appreciated the painful embarrassment forced upon him by cruel events may be taken for granted. His education at West Point afforded him no guidance and gave him no relief. West Point taught everything but the art of war and patriotism. In its adhesion to the doctrine of blind obedience to orders the cadet ceases to be a citizen without becoming a soldier. The nice distinctions every voter in the land was called to consider between the old colonial doctrine of State sovereignty and the power of the General Government were not included in the academy's curriculum. Each graduate was left to judge for himself between the blind obedience to orders from his State and those of the General Government.

That George H. Thomas paused in painful anxiety between his duty and his inclination is true, for that was the nature of the man. But this never extended so far as to make him doubtful as to the

use of his calling. He could still continue under the command of his Government, or he could resign and return to private life. This is precisely the issue he made up for himself, and the possible resignation was made more favorable by an event which occurred about this time. In a railroad accident he received an injury to his spine that for a space made military duty impossible. The effects of the injury accompanied him through life and gave rise to that slowness of motion which was thought by the ignorant a part of his character. While in doubt as to the result of his injuries he was looking about for some means to win the daily bread necessary to himself and the dear woman he had made his wife. It was at this time that he wrote the following letter that has been made the basis of so many cruel and unjust attacks:

*Colonel Francis H. Smith, Supt. Virginia Military Institute, Lexington, Va.*

DEAR SIR: In looking over the files of the *National Intelligencer* this morning, I met with your advertisement for a commandant of cadets and instructor at the institute. If not already filled I will be under obligations if you will inform me what salary and allowances pertain to the situation, as from present appearances I fear it will soon be necessary for me to be looking up some means of support.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

GEO. H. THOMAS, *Major U. S. Army.*

That is all. He was "looking up some means of support," and the means contemplated is as far from any tender of service to the then unformed Confederate Government as an offer to enter the ministry.

Thomas possessed in himself a noiseless machine that consumed its own smoke. He made no confessions, uttered no whining complaints, perpetrated no egotistical or other memoirs. A grand, silent man, he left his deeds to speak for themselves, and, with impressive dignity, to history his proudest vindication. We know enough of him now to realize that when his sense of duty made its appeal he responded promptly to its call, regardless of the sacrifice of feeling from which it caused him to suffer.

The man who could so entirely subjugate his honorable ambition to his sense of justice as to decline a great command tendered him by the Government when he thought such acceptance would be a wrong to a brother soldier, was not the man to play fast and loose with his conscience at a time when the Government of his allegiance was in peril. The fact that, after the war, he pronounced the charge a falsehood settles the matter forever.

We are yet too near the awful conflict, which shook our country from centre to circumference, to deal justly with either the men or the events of that war. Although a new generation is here, and the men who grasped, in the bitter hate of a death struggle, at each other's throats, have mainly passed away, and new men are taking up the threads of life, the inherited feeling is yet upon us so potently that it is difficult to render justice to either side.

It is hard for us to realize that the men who took

up arms in behalf of State sovereignty were not only earnest but honest. We forget, or fail to know, that while at the North the masses had passed imperceptibly from the ties and bondage of the old colonial idea of State sovereignty to belief in our fabric as that of a nation, the South, with its sparse, rural population, mainly a mass of provincial ignorance, held to the colonial idea with a faith and pertinacity difficult to appreciate. It was not faith alone, it was fanaticism. "Men do not get up and fight over a purely mental proposition," said President Lincoln. The belief born with them through many generations was so strong that to question it was to question their sanity, and to deprive them of their supposed right by force was regarded as a wrong to be resisted to the death. So strong was this faith that the leaders at the South believed that secession would be accomplished without violence. They had not only their own people to build on, but the known sympathy of the Democratic party at the North and the avowed opinions of such men as William H. Seward, Salmon P. Chase, Horace Greeley, and Edwin M. Stanton. "Let the erring sisters depart in peace," said General Winfield Scott, and the sentiment was echoed far and wide. Had not this opinion prevailed the result might have been different from what we are now so happy to chronicle. While Jefferson Davis and his group of Southern leaders were calmly waiting for Virginia to pass her act of secession our National capital was without a

garrison. It could have been captured and held by a regiment of Virginia militia.

I have treated of this at some length because of its bearing on the mind of George H. Thomas. His thoughtful intellect and studious habits forced these considerations upon him. He could not, indeed, have attempted to put them aside, as I happen well to know. I first made his personal acquaintance when, as Judge Advocate of the so-called Buell Commission, I summoned him before it. His cool, quiet, incisive statement of the circumstances and situations of Buell's unfortunate campaign, the first and last given us, won my admiration, and I seized the first opportunity after the war to cultivate an intimacy. This occurred at Washington while Thomas was there awaiting a command. The late President Garfield, an enthusiastic admirer of the Nashville hero, accompanied me in our visits.

George H. Thomas to a casual acquaintance was not a pleasant companion. His cold, quiet manner and extreme reticence made such intercourse exceedingly awkward. His deep, thoughtful eyes, heavy brows, and firm chin, made one feel as if he were gazing into the mouth of a cannon, and the cannon said nothing.

Few men, however, could resist the kindly, persistent ways of Garfield. He soon brought Thomas out in his real characteristics, and we were delighted to find that our stern-appearing hero had not only the modesty of a girl, but the simplicity in manners

of a child. He talked to us freely, and we were surprised to find that all the delicate, intricate conditions presented to him, when called on to act between his native State and the Government he had sworn to support, had been ably weighed and justly decided.

There was one subject from which he shrunk with an innate diffidence he could not conquer, and that was any reference to his own merits. I remember his blushing embarrassment at the praise we gave his masterly management at Nashville.

"Gentlemen," he said, "you award me more praise than I deserve. The Government at Washington, and the general before Richmond could not know what we knew, that the Confederate Army was demoralized, and that the longer we held them at bay the weaker they became. While we in Nashville were comfortable, sheltered, well fed, and gaining every day in strength, poor Hood and his ragged, badly-supplied men were lying out on the bleak hills about the place, being continually thinned out by sickness and desertion."

### THOMAS UNDER PATTERSON.

About the first service rendered in our army by the then Colonel Thomas is singularly illustrative of his high sense of justice and his courage. He was under General Patterson, and his first victory, a small affair, was rendered significant by the fact that in it he attacked at Falling-Waters Thomas J. Jackson, and so the subsequently-known Stonewall

Jackson crossed swords with the afterwards famous Rock of Chickamauga. The two great captains of the war met early in the field, and each, on his side, carried to his grave about all the foundation for true hero-worship to which the war of arms gave rise.

Yet it is not of this that I wish to treat, but of Thomas' subsequent conduct when his general fell under the displeasure of both Government and people. It was Patterson's duty to hold General Joseph E. Johnson's forces at bay while General McDowell fought our first great fight at Bull Run. This Patterson failed to accomplish, and the solemn indignation of the Government, together with the wrath of the people, fairly pulverized the poor old Pennsylvanian.

It was aggravating. I made one of the unfortunate volunteers in that tumultuous combat of two armed mobs, that fought each other in a promiscuous manner by regiments and brigades with a stunning noise and very little execution. At three P.M. of that beautiful Sunday, the conflict hung doubtful—that is, each side was in doubt as to which should run away—at that critical moment the forces under General Joseph E. Johnson appeared with loud yells, and we immediately advanced on Washington.

Colonel George H. Thomas came promptly to the defence of his general. It was a gallant act and strictly in accord with the character of a noble man. He could have remained silent. He was a subordi-

nate and therefore held free from any responsibility. Yet although General Patterson failed to act upon the suggestions of his able colonel, Thomas nevertheless came boldly forward in a vindication of the unfortunate man.

This event is the more striking to me because of the contrast afforded by the conduct of another eminent officer about the same time.

My general, Schenck, had been ordered by General McDowell, in establishing Camp Upton, to throw out a small detachment on the railroad in the direction of Vienna. General Schenck not only obeyed instructions to the letter, but accompanied the regiment detailed, to see that the order was properly executed. General Schenck availed himself of the railroad, and as the command approached Vienna it was fired upon by a section of artillery which, by some accident, happened to be there. Ten men were killed and the little command thrown into the most direful disorder.

The storm of ridicule and condemnation that was poured upon the head of my general has no parallel in the prolific abuse of the press. One looks back at it now with amazement. What it was all about, wherein was the blame, are questions which no man can answer. We were blind worshippers of West Point at that time, and one sentence from General McDowell, informing the non-combatants of the press that General Schenck had merely obeyed orders, would have quieted down the absurd storm. But

General McDowell, unlike the generous Thomas, preserved a portentous silence, thus indirectly indorsing the abuse.

The time came, not long after, when General McDowell needed the sort of defence denied Robert C. Schenck. Such need never came to Thomas.

### DEFEAT OF ZOLLIKOFFER.

George H. Thomas, promoted to the rank of Brigadier-General of Volunteers, was ordered to Kentucky to serve under Anderson in a general conquest of territory. It was the mad desire of the Administration not so much to defeat Confederate armies as to conquer territory. It could not comprehend that to disperse an army was to have the territory as a consequence.

Thomas was not impressed with this territorial theory, and before leaving Washington he suggested the plan of a campaign that, if successful, would go far towards crippling the Confederates in their stronghold. It was to invade Tennessee through Cumberland Gap and not only occupy a portion of the country disaffected toward secession, but cut one of the railways upon which the Confederate Army of Virginia depended for supplies.

The plan was favorably considered and Thomas left under the impression that he would be employed to aid, at least, in executing the strategic move which he had originated. He was soon taught a different lesson, and learned, to his mortification,

that he was distrusted by the authorities at Washington as a loyal soldier. How this lack of confidence pained him we can well understand, and how it followed him to the end of his career history teaches us.

In Kentucky he addressed himself to the work he saw necessary—a work which from that time out made his success so remarkable. This included not only the drill and discipline of his troops, but a care of them that made him quartermaster and commissary in one and gained for him not only an efficient force, but a love that found expression in the pet name of "Pap Thomas" that was his to the end.

While thus engaged he learned that with his plan of campaign accepted another general, O. M. Mitchell, but a few days his senior, had been selected to carry it into effect. This General Thomas, whom General Sherman, in his memoirs, assures us, with Sherman's peculiar self-complacency, shrank from an independent command—and this Badeau, in that work of fiction known as "The Military Life of Grant," reiterates—this modest, shrinking officer immediately protested against the injustice done him and asked to be relieved from the service ordered. He was not relieved, but his campaign was never attempted.

Operating, as our forces were, in an enemy's country it was difficult for an ordinary officer to know either the position or number of the armies opposed to him. Every native felt it his patriotic duty

to deceive, and the air was full of the gravest exaggerations as to the Confederate numbers and intent.

Thomas was, however, no ordinary officer. His cool, clear head took in all that it was necessary to know, and he soon satisfied himself that if the Confederate general, Albert Sidney Johnson, had one-fourth the number of men wild rumor gave him and Sherman, Buell, and others believed him to have, he would not be acting so cautiously on the defensive. The South never suffered from a lack of enterprise, and during the game of brag and bluff played by the Confederate officers with so much success, this made them not only accept battle when offered, but take the initiative, and attack superior numbers. Facts developed since the war sustain Thomas in his first estimate, for we have learned that nearly fifty thousand men under Buell were held in check by less than fourteen thousand under Albert Sidney Johnson.

The difficulties attending an advance, however, were of a sort to check the ardor of any officer who gave thought to the preparations necessary to success. Raw recruits were hurried to the front without necessary supplies, often without uniforms, and sometimes without arms.

George H. Thomas, went to work, with indomitable will, as I have said, organizing and equipping the men assigned to his brigade. He was much annoyed, while thus engaged, by that historical absurdity, Andrew Johnson, who insisted upon an immediate invasion of East Tennessee. Thomas

was quite as willing to march in that direction, but not until he had troops and supplies sufficient to make the move promise reasonable success. Thomas' indifference to the interference of the Tennessee Senator did not serve to strengthen confidence in his loyalty at Washington.

The work he accomplished soon told for itself in a victory over a superior force led by Generals Crittenden and Zollikoffer.

The long-continued and disastrous defeats inflicted by the Confederates on the Union forces, with, in almost every instance, an inferior force, had widely dissimilar effects in the two sections of country concerned. While the heroic qualities of our Northern people aroused them to more vigorous efforts, the Confederates at the South were made over-confident. In this way Zollikoffer and Crittenden, when threatened by Thomas, instead of remaining in their fortifications, and so availing themselves of the advantages of their position, moved boldly out and challenged our general to a fight on equal terms.

Having arrived within ten miles of the Confederate fortifications General Thomas halted his little army to enable Schoeff to join him as ordered. His advanced regiments were posted on the roads leading to the enemy's position with cavalry and infantry pickets thrown well to the front to guard against surprise. His object then being to concentrate his forces for an advance, as well as to protect

his army against an attack should the Confederates venture out of their fortifications, he ordered General Schoeff to send three regiments to his position and awaited their arrival.

The Confederate generals moved out from their fortifications on the Cumberland before daylight January 19, 1862, expecting to brush aside the picket line and chase an armed mob from the field to the music of the rebel yell. This had been the order of battle up to date. Instead, however, of surprising the Union Army, they were themselves surprised to find a strong, well-posted picket line, that fought and fell back so slowly and obstinately, that it looked for awhile as if the battle was to be fought on this fringe-work of our army, and when at last, they succeeded in reaching our lines, they were received and treated in a way that silenced the rebel yell and in less than an hour drove them from the field in disorder. They had encountered a novel force evolved from the Napoleonic brain of a great military man who knew how to utilize the raw material found in a heroic race.

The result of this victory, both North and South, was as startling as had been that of the first Bull Run. The Northern heart was mightily lifted up, while at the South there was a corresponding depression. This last came from a strange feeling which spread through the Confederacy that a new element has entered into the contest. Before that the South had fought from positions selected by its

own officers, with all the advantages given by a defensive line, and greatly inferior forces had won important victories. In this fight the forces were equally tested in a fair field, with no advantage to either, and the Confederates had lost. For the first time they came in contact with what seemed veteran soldiers, and instead of driving a mere militia before them were forced to retreat.

This was the first battle of our Civil War that was not a casualty. It was fought on a plan well matured by the general in command, and a compact, well-handled force carried into effect the victory that had been organized in advance. Victories were rare at the time, and this brilliant success of our brave fellows and their able commander stirred the hearts of the people into renewed effort, whilst it lifted into hope the despondent Government at Washington. Orders of congratulation fell upon the army in thick profusion, but in none did the name of the Virginian who won the victory appear. For such service, or for none at all, officers of small calibre were lifted into responsible positions. But this name, the brighest and bravest of all, was left without any mention. "Let the Virginian wait," said the President, and he was of all men the one to wait. Thomas could bide his time and put to shame the men who abused and the men who doubted him.

It is greatly to be regretted that his plan of invasion through Cumberland Gap was not attempted.

If successful, and it had every prospect of success, the blow struck the Confederacy would have been well-nigh fatal to it, and might have shortened the war in the West by at least two years. But Andrew Johnson became eager to capture Nashville and use an army of a hundred thousand men to hold his Governorship secure, and after the success of Grant at Fort Donelson opened the way, had sufficient influence to attain his end. The Government, instead of striking an effective blow at the enemy's army, went into the profitless business of conquering territory.

Albert Sidney Johnson, who had been calling frantically for reinforcements that could not be given him, saw, with intense satisfaction, the armies of the Union move off in a vain attempt to hold a State that had its title at his headquarters.

### UNDER BUELL.

General Don Carlos Buell, assigned to the command of the Army of the Ohio, was a brave gentleman of clear, cultivated mind and soldierly bearing. He had however, two fatal defects that embarrassed him in all his campaigns and proved his ruin in the end. In the first place he labored under the delusion that, in commissioning him to command, the Government gave him an army as well as commission. His second defect was his infatuated belief that war is a science to be learned from books.

A genuine soldier, however, he obeyed orders, and

when directed to conquer and hold Tennessee so that Andy Johnson could develop the supposed Union feeling, he placed the War Governor in possession of Nashville, and spread his army over the State to keep down the rebels, or rather uphold the Union sentiment.

About this time occurred an historical episode that the pen of the chronicler cannot treat with too much consideration and dignity.

The great Halleck, West Point's proudest product, left the War Department and took the field in person. When he threw the weight of that person, and it was hefty, into the scales of war, the scales trembled. It was his lofty duty to repair the disaster at Shiloh, and move the united forces of various arms and armies from that shameful field to the supposed objective point of Corinth.

As the camp at Shiloh had been carefully pitched and left unprotected in order to invite an attack, and make a surprise possible, so that thousands of poor fellows were slaughtered while arming, and those who could escape were driven in disorder to the river, Halleck, more cautious, moved a short distance during the day and fortified at night. The enemy as leisurely fell back, and as leisurely moved his supplies, so that the embodied art of war found no one to oppose his possession of the sleepy village of Corinth.

This was a bloodless affair, without results, but having accomplished it very much, in conclusion, as

Sam Weller said when the boy mastered the alphabet, "vether it was vorth while to go so far for so little vas a question of taste," the great Halleck withdrew to his office in Washington and gave his ponderous mind to meditation and potent suggestion.

He accomplished one other good thing, he made George H. Thomas a major-general and gave him the position Grant would have held but for that officer's conduct at Shiloh.

After the fall of Corinth Thomas asked to be relieved from his command of the right wing and reassigned to his old command in the Army of the Ohio. He was moved to this by two considerations. His generous nature would not permit him to accept promotion at the expense of a brother officer. In the second place he sought to return to the brave men whose confidence he had gained, and whose efficiency he had painfully trained, until, under all circumstances, they stood by him like veterans. With these men he continued throughout the war. He was wont to speak of them with an enthusiasm quite foreign to his habit:

"The bravest fellows and the finest soldiers in the world." He said.

There is no question but that the rank and file called from civil life to battle for our Union had in them the making of the best troops ever put under arms. Young, brave, active, intelligent, it only needed a little instruction to make them all that a general could demand.

The trouble with us, however, was that these brave men had no instruction. The drill-sergeants of West Point were elevated to high office. They were brigadier and major-generals, and were too lofty to concern themselves about the only thing they were competent to teach. Now the importance of drill, as taught at West Point, is grossly exaggerated, the larger share of it being for show only, but a part of it is necessary for the purpose of handling troops. The poor men got it neither from West Point nor from their elected officers.

The measure taken by the men who made up our volunteer army of the officers over them was singularly accurate, and generally openly expressed in good-natured contempt or rough admiration. It was from this intuitive knowledge of human nature that General Thomas so soon obtained the loving confidence of his troops. He was careful to cut down the drill to what was actually necessary, and while kind and considerate in looking after the comfort of his men he was yet the strictest of disciplinarians. Always grave, dignified, and reserved, he yet invited confidence by his untiring attention to the needs of those dependent upon him.

Buell's campaign in Tennessee and Kentucky was about as forlorn a failure as any that disgraced our armies in the war, but this was no fault of Buell's. His one great duty, after keeping Andrew Johnson in possession of the War Governorship of Tennessee, was to keep open his line of communications to

Louisville, Kentucky. With John Morgan in his rear this was no easy task. That enterprising officer tore up the railroad on which Buell depended for supplies as rapidly as twenty-five or thirty thousand men could relay it.

He was in this condition when Kirby Smith invaded Kentucky and Braxton Bragg crossed the Tennessee River at Chattanooga to march northward and form a junction with Smith. While Bragg executed this daring march, cutting loose from his base of supplies and living on the country Buell gathered together his eighty-two thousand and fell back on Louisville, where his command was augmented to a hundred thousand.

The Government, alarmed and discouraged at this extraordinary operation, relieved Buell and tendered the command to Thomas. Here again was an act on the part of Thomas that convinced his associates and the authorities at Washington that he distrusted himself to such an extent that he could not be forced into a command involving a heavy responsibility.

It does seem strange, looking back, as I do, at the feverish ambition, the miserable jealousies, the low intrigues which shamed our armies, that one man can be found, so possessed of genuine manhood as to be above all this selfish greed for office. Of course rank meant power—power in its possessor to prove the value of his work in a field where the destinies of the Republic hung doubtful on bloody results and the eyes of the world were upon the men en-

gaged in the conflict. No man felt this more keenly or was more hurt when slighted than George H. Thomas, but his sense of justice and honor held his ambition in check, and he sleeps beneath his honored name, that name itself an epitaph of praise that Shakespeare's pen could not embellish.

The Government did not press the command upon our great soldier, and Buell, in return for this generous conduct, made him second in authority, but failed to give him anything to command.

The trouble with Buell I have stated before, and it resulted necessarily in his consulting no one, and sharing no responsibility with his subordinate.

When, therefore, the army was offered Thomas he was forced to say that, although next in rank to Buell, he knew so little of the Army of the Ohio that he could not well take command at an hour when its general was about to fight a great battle.

The great battle was fought. It occurred near Perryville, Kentucky, occupied two hours, was fought and finished without the knowledge of Buell and with no one on the field authorized to take command in his absence.

It was on the 7th of October that Buell put his forces in line of battle and announcing his intent to fight the next day retired to his headquarters four miles in the rear of the centre. As he had not consulted Bragg as to the time of the engagement there was some confusion occasioned by his throwing three divisions on the Union left wing. This at first

seems a bold move on the part of the Confederates, but a study of the front presented by our army shows the attack not to have been so desperate after all. The assault was made on the left of our army commanded by General McCook, and as the troops formed on his right had moved away, there was an opening between McCook and Rosseau, of which two divisions of the Confederates took advantage, and hurrying in, turned their backs on six divisions of our army, and wiped McCook's command from the field. This extraordinary fight, which went on with the utmost fury for two hours, was in sight of our centre, and in hearing of our right, and neither centre nor right moved to assist their overpressed comrades. Had General Thomas, then at the extreme right, been empowered to act, he would have been along the whole line, and when the desperate attack was made could have swung around that line and caught the furious Confederates in their own trap. Unfortunately he was not in command, and so, in those two hours, the enemy left dead upon the field eight hundred and fifty-one of our men with two thousand eight hundred and thirty-one wounded. It was one of the bloodiest affairs of the war and, with the exception of Shiloh, the most shameful.

### UNDER ROSECRANS.

Buell was relieved of his command, and Thomas should have succeeded him. They who assert so

positively that self-distrust restrained this ablest officer of them all from accepting the post to which he was entitled, should know the chagrin he suffered when the position was given to Rosecrans. He protested, and that my readers may appreciate his feelings, I give the protest in full. Here it is, addressed to General Halleck:

"Soon after coming to Kentucky I urged on the Government to send me twenty thousand men properly equipped to take the field, that I might at least make the attempt to take Knoxville and secure East Tennessee. My suggestions were not listened to, but were even passed by in silence. But without boasting, I believe that I have exhibited at least sufficient energy to show that if I had been intrusted with that expedition at that time (fall of 1861), I might have conducted it successfully. Before Corinth I was intrusted with the command of the right wing, or Army of the Tennessee. I feel confident that I did my duty patriotically and with a considerable amount of credit to myself. As soon as the emergency was over I was relieved and ordered to the command of my old division. I went to my duties without a murmur, as I am neither ambitious nor have I any political aspirations. On the 30th of September I received an order through your aid, Colonel McKibben, placing me in command of the Department of Ohio, and directing General Buell to turn over the command of his troops to me. This order came just as General Buell had, by extraordinary efforts, prepared his army to pursue and drive the rebels from Kentucky. Feeling that a great injustice would be done him if not permitted to carry out his plans, and that I would be placed in a situation to be disgraced, I requested that he might be retained in command. The order relieving him was suspended, but to-day I find him relieved by General Rosecrans, my junior, although I do

not feel conscious that any just cause exists for overslaughing me by placing me under my junior, and I, therefore, am deeply mortified and grieved at the course taken in this matter."

General William S. Rosecrans is a man of genius, who looks to large results with a healthy contempt for all details. Could "Old Rosy," as he was called by his troops, be put in command of a well-drilled and disciplined army, well supplied, and ready to march, he would plan you a magnificent campaign and fight it out to victory. But no such army presented itself, and the man who planned campaigns had to make one, and put in all his sleepless nights and laborious days to a work which, in other lands, is done by his subordinates and the Government.

Rosecrans was unfortunate in being promoted against the wishes and protests of Stanton and Halleck. He was selected by Salmon P. Chase and President Lincoln. I have given the details of this selection elsewhere, and I learned from it that Edwin M. Stanton, with all his patriotism, force of character, and fine intellect, was not a just man where his feelings got the better of his judgment.

General Thomas, as we have seen, protested against the assignment of Rosecrans to the command on the ground, not only of service, but of seniority, yet when he learned that Rosecrans' commission antedated his own he submitted to the wrong done him.

There was, however, in this a trick, which one

finds difficult to comprehend as having been perpetrated by the Government at Washington. Rosecrans' commission as Major-General of Volunteers was issued August 16, 1862. This made him the junior not only of General Thomas, but of McCook and Crittenden. To obviate this awkward state of affairs, the date of Rosecrans' commission was changed to March 21, 1862. Now, as the President had, under the law, a right to assign to duty without regard to the traditions and practices of the regular army, one fails to understand the reason for this clumsy attempt at concealment, which amounted, in fact, to forgery.

When Thomas learned the fact, he said: "I have made my last protest while the war lasts. You may put a stick over me if you choose to do so; I will take care, however, to so manage my command, whatever it may be, that it shall not be involved in the mistakes of the 'stick.'"

From that time out to the end of the war, no more protests or complaints went up from the great soldier.

General Rosecrans offered to continue Thomas in his honorary position as second in command. But our general had realized too clearly the absurdity of this, and, declining it, he was assigned the command of the centre composed of four divisions, the right was given to Major-General McCook, and the left to Major-General Crittenden.

General Thomas was anxious to put in operation

his old plan of invasion through Cumberland Gap, and so cut the enemy's great line of supply. Rosecrans did not approve. He entertained the infatuation of the politicians, that it was territory for which he was fighting; and so moved on to Nashville to regain Tennessee.

There was much talk over and high consideration given the loyal citizens. I once, on an occasion previous to this campaign, accompanied Generals Rosecrans and Schenck to see President Lincoln concerning the loyal citizens of West Virginia, where we had seen some hard service. I sat silent until Rosecrans had about exhausted the subject, when the President turned abruptly to me, and asked what I knew about the people of West Virginia.

"Well, Mr. President," I replied, "there are two sorts of people in West Virginia, as General Rosecrans says; they are the disloyal and the loyal. The difference between them is this: The disloyal man shoulders his musket and goes out to fight; the loyal man remains at home to hide behind laurel bushes and shoot us for our boots."[1]

Great injustice has been done General Rosecrans. He was the beau-ideal of a soldier—brave, dashing, self-confident, and full of resource. As I have said, had he been put in command of veterans, well disciplined, armed and provisioned, he would have fought his way to Richmond. This sort of man, however, lacks organizing ability; and to mould new

recruits into efficient soldiers as Thomas did—to bring a department through a thorough knowledge of detail and choice of subordinates up to a smoothly working machine were tasks quite beyond him.

He did not, in this respect, differ from his associates in arms with the exception of Thomas. McClellan, for example, has gone into history as a great organizer. He kept an immense force about Washington for nearly a year. He certainly got his men into white cotton gloves, and perfected his reviews to such extent that they were imposing. But he kept his raw recruits raw recruits all the same under the one general order, "Avoid engagements." With the Confederate flag waving its insults on Munson's Hill, he trained his troops into a strange awe of the enemy, when by continuous skirmishing he could have accustomed them to a service that is the only one in which to make the soldier.

Rosecrans began with the old cry to the War Department for troops and supplies. Instead of moving at once against Bragg, he delayed at Nashville to repair railroads and restock depots, and he got, in return for his efforts, scant support, and no sympathy from that Department. The line of railroad from Louisville to Nashville called for more men to protect and keep it in running order than all of Tennessee was worth.

Thomas asked only for a column of twenty thousand men to penetrate to the heart of the Confederacy through Cumberland Gap and Knoxville, but this

plan was put aside to conquer territory in Tennessee, and give the loyal element the blessing of Andrew Johnson as Governor at Nashville.

### THOMAS AT STONE RIVER.

On the 28th of December, 1862, Rosecrans moved out in the direction of Murfreesboro. Major-General McCook was in command of the right, Thomas of the centre, and Crittenden of the left. Marching on parallel roads the entire command came, on Dec. 30th, abreast on the banks of Stone River, in front of Bragg's army holding Murfreesboro. Rosecrans had an idea, as on many such occasions, that the enemy was in full retreat, and to hurry him on he ordered Crittenden forward across the river. This gallant officer soon discovered that, instead of retreating, the enemy was there in full force, strongly posted and evidently disposed to dispute every foot of ground he occupied. The hasty withdrawal of Crittenden's forces transferred the idea of the enemy's retreat from Rosecrans' brain to that of Bragg, and the plucky Confederate changed his purpose from a defensive battle to one of attack.

The story of the battle which followed can be told in few words.

The enemy, crossing the river, fell in such force upon Rosecrans' right that McCook's command was doubled up and driven, in wild confusion and with great loss, upon Thomas holding the centre. Our able general and his gallant troops not only held

their own, but changed front and shifted position, in the face of a victorious foe, with such cool precision, that they held the field. Failing to break the centre and so perfect his victory, Bragg shifted his forces from our right to the left, and made a desperate effort to double that back as he had McCook's command. Failing in this he abandoned the offensive, and at night occupied his old position of the morning.

Such was the condition when the conflict ended for the day. It proved the cool courage and staying powers of the troops under Thomas, and to these qualities may be attributed the fact that our army was not defeated and driven back in disorder upon Nashville. As it was it was so shattered that Rosecrans called a council of war to determine the necessary moves to secure a safe retreat. That such retreat was not resorted to, and that our forces were held on the field until victory, a great victory, was awarded us, came, it is said, from two odd circumstances: At the council of war, held that evening, a fierce discussion arose as to the necessity of a retreat. In this discussion General Thomas took no part. Indeed, worn out by the fatigue of a terrible day, he settled back in a corner and fell asleep. Being awakened to give his opinion, he merely said, "This army cannot retreat," and again fell asleep. About midnight, after the council had adjourned, Rosecrans, accompanied by McCook, rode to the rear to select a new position for the next day's struggle. On the banks of a small creek two miles toward Nashville

General Rosecrans observed a line of fires, built, contrary to orders, by his own wagoners, and jumped to the conclusion that these were the fires of the enemy. "The enemy are in our rear," he said, and attributed Thomas' oracular utterance to a knowledge of the fact. So riding back at a gallop to where his officers were still assembled he announced that "we must fight or surrender."

The two armies seem to have been equally demoralized by the fierce struggle of the 30th, for they lay in sight of each other for two days without either making an effort to renew the fierce conflict. I have no doubt that, if the truth were known, Bragg had under consideration the propriety of a retreat, at the very time when Rosecrans was consulting his subordinates on the necessity of falling back.

As it was, Colonel John F. Miller led some regiments of Negley's division, without orders from his immediate commander, and in violation of one from another general of division, and, attacking the Confederates under General Breckenridge, drove them, in a brilliant charge, from a position which proved to be the key of the situation. Bragg, who had changed his plan from offensive to defensive operations, saw that his position was no longer tenable, and so, acknowledging defeat, retired at night-fall, leaving his dead and wounded behind him, but getting away with his material in a manner that should not have been permitted.

This victory confounded Rosecrans' enemies at

Washington and carried him to the top crest of favor in the popular mind. But the fact is none the less clear that he owed his success to the able subordinate, who in this instance, as in all others where he took part, won the victory from an acknowledged defeat. The silent soldier, who carried so unpretendingly the brains of a great commander, saw, without complaint, the credit of this noble work given to another. He was of too large a nature to be troubled with jealousy, even when he saw the laurels which he had justly gained made a present to his inferior.

For six months following this victory Rosecrans remained at Murfreesboro, not idle, for he had his men building fortifications and bridges, repairing railroads and striving to get the necessary supplies for a forward movement. The glow of his achievements died out in the delay, and the authorities at Washington, while denying him men and material liberally given to other commanders, grew clamorous in their demands for immediate action.

It was while lying here that General Thomas, in common with other officers, asked for a brief leave of absence to visit his family. It was granted, but, upon second thought, our general concluded not to avail himself of the favor and so remained. He never solicited or received another, nor lost a day from duty during the entire war. The general used to tell, in this connection, and in great glee, of a soldier who approached him one day with a request for a furlough.

Judge Advocate and the duty of finding transportation for the honorable court devolved upon me. I found that in one day almost the whole railroad had been destroyed by John Morgan and his merry men, from within a few miles of Nashville to the Ohio River. The perils of that trip remain vividly imprinted upon my memory. The escape from capture by wandering bands of guerillas were many and almost miraculous. How we trudged on foot, travelled in wagons, turned hand-cars on pieces of road that remained intact, would make a volume about as interesting as a romance. In twenty-four hours the railroad as a means of transportation had ceased to exist.

Before Rosecrans could loosen his hold upon this railroad, he had to transport his supplies, and fetch up his troops, and, in addition to this, knowing that our animals would have to be foraged off the country, the general had to wait until the growing corn was sufficiently matured to afford a supply. Of course this called for a long and, to the authorities in Washington, exasperating delay. It was claimed that while Rosecrans remained idle the armies to the right and left of him were in danger, as the Confederates were at liberty to draw for reinforcements on the forces in front of him. The telegraph lines, when left unbroken, were employed, almost continually, in conveying peremptory orders which had in them as little sympathy as knowledge of the situation and common-sense.

Chattanooga was not only the gateway to the South, but it covered and held secure one of the main lines of transportation upon which the Confederate Army in front of Richmond depended for its reinforcements and supplies. The wild, picturesque beauty of the place had been moulded by nature into a great fortification. It lies upon the left bank of the Tennessee, which river is itself impassable when guarded by almost any force, while Lookout Mountain that towers upon the southwest rises in a perpendicular precipice almost from the water's edge. To the east rises the lofty Missionary Ridge, running almost parallel with the Tennessee from Chattanooga valley to Chickamauga Creek, well-nigh as impassable in the face of an enemy as the river itself.

Now from Lookout Mountain southwest for eighty miles the continuous crests of the Sand Mountains present an almost unbroken palisade. Stretching from Chattanooga northeastwardly are other ranges of mountains, so that flanked on both sides there seems to be built by nature almost impregnable barriers against an invading army. Into this stronghold Bragg withdrew his forces, fully impressed with the belief that he was at last secure from the Union Army.

Rosecrans knew that it would be impossible to disturb the enemy by way of his front. He therefore tried upon Bragg precisely the same strategy that had driven him from Duck River. This time, how-

ever, it was upon a much larger scale and so audacious in execution that the Confederate general had no suspicion of what was in store for him.

Sending a portion of Crittenden's corps, numbering seven thousand men, under the gallant Hazen, over the mountains, Rosecrans made sufficient demonstration in front to occupy the attention of General Bragg, while he advanced his entire army to Bridgeport, Stevenson, and vicinities, southwest of Chattanooga. This done with great skill, he passed the river, and crossed rapidly over Sand Mountain, his troops making roads as they went, into Lookout Valley, and posted his army, the left resting at Wauhatchie, seven miles from Chattanooga, and his right at Valley Head, thirty-five miles distant, the whole facing Lookout Mountain and threatening Bragg's line of communications, and in this way completely turning the flank of the famous fortifications.

The first news that the astonished Confederate general had of the situation was that a large force of all arms was menacing his line of communications toward Dalton. He hastily evacuated Chattanooga, as he claims, for the purpose of protecting his line, and of taking our army in detail as its three corps crossed the mountains and appeared in the valleys beyond. If this latter was any part of his design it was never executed. He posted his army from Lee and Gordon's Mills to Lafayette, facing the passes of Pigeon Mountain, intending, as he says, to

strike the head of Rosecrans' column as it debouched into the valley. His opportunity to accomplish this was greatly strengthened by the conduct of General Alec. McDowel McCook, commanding the right wing of the Union Army. This officer having, after a deal of labor and pains, scaled the mountains, seems to have instinctively divined Bragg's intention, for instead of moving to the left up the Broom Town Valley and joining his forces to the centre under Thomas, which he could have done in a day, not only came to a halt and lost two days considering what he should do next, but then marched back over the mountains and lost several more days getting to Thomas' rear.

Believing that Bragg was in full retreat, and urged on from Washington, where the same impression prevailed, Rosecrans ordered a general and rapid pursuit. Against this General Thomas earnestly remonstrated. He urged upon General Rosecrans to abandon the idea of the pursuit of an enemy the nature and extent of whose movements he had no means of knowing. He advised Rosecrans to secure the fruits of his brilliant strategy, establish a new base of supplies at Chattanooga, rest his army, well-nigh exhausted by continuous labor, perfect his communications with the rear, and replenish his stores. He could then move out against Bragg with assurance of securing the results of a victory, should he gain one.

But this was precisely what was not tolerated at

the impatient War Department in any of the several armies of the United States. Rosecrans' delay had come to be a by-word and source of abuse. His order to pursue Bragg was both unfortunate and fortunate. It prevented his holding Chattanooga with his line of supplies open, but it sent Crittenden out of Chattanooga upon Bragg's right and rear and awakened that officer to the fact that he had better be taking care of himself instead of trying to attack Rosecrans' army corps in detail.

Thomas' caution and good sense saved the army from utter ruin. Instead of pushing on in rapid pursuit, he moved so slowly that when his advance division came in contact with Bragg's army he had the right and left wings of the Union forces in supporting distance.

### CHICKAMAUGA.

On the 19th of September, 1863, the two armies encountered each other in a blind sort of a way in the midst of a dense forest on Chickamauga Creek. The nature of the country prevented any accurate estimate of numbers or position of opposing forces until the same were developed by hard fighting.

General Thomas commanded our forces on the line, and when night came, putting an end to the first day's conflict, it found a drawn battle with terrific slaughter, but in which neither side had gained any apparent advantage.

Night, falling upon forest and broken openings

strewn thick with dead and dying, found both armies fearfully shattered from the desperate struggle, but each confronting the other determined to renew the conflict with the early dawn. The relative conditions of the armies on the second day were materially changed from those of the first. Nearly every brigade of the Army of the Cumberland had been hotly engaged, while one division of Bragg's army had not been at all, and two others but slightly under fire. During the night General Longstreet arrived with a reinforcement of veterans from Lee's army. This threw the weight of numbers and fresh troops on the side of the Confederate commander, and he moved his whole army to the west bank of the Chickamauga, assigned Generals Polk and Longstreet to the command of his right and left wings, and ordered General Polk to begin the attack in force against the left wing of the National Army at daybreak.

In the meantime, as the firing of the first day's battle ceased, General Thomas selected a new position and posted the five divisions he had commanded during the day so as to offer a strong and compact front to the expected assault.

General Rosecrans, after a council of war with his general officers, directed the withdrawal of McCook's and Crittenden's corps from the positions held during the day. Two of McCook's divisions were posted on the right of Thomas, two of Crittenden's stationed in reserve on the slopes of Missionary

Ridge, and another division [Negley's of his own corps] was promised to Thomas to cover his left flank.

During the night the National Army was on the march filing into position, and covering their front with fortifications rudely constructed of logs and rails. Then, this done, amid the gloomy darkness of the dense forest, and in grim silence, broken only by the cries of the wounded, it awaited the day and the fierce onset of the enemy.

But one brigade of the promised division reached Thomas' left, and this furnished only a weak, thin line to secure his exposed flank.

As the day advanced and the thick mist which obscured the battlefield lifted, fresh divisions of Breckenridge and the veteran troops of Cleburne assaulted Thomas' left in a furious charge. Upon the steadiness of the troops holding this flank depended the safety of the Union Army. Again and again Bragg threw his gallant men upon Thomas' line only to be driven back with great loss. In charge and counter-charge the contending lines swayed back and forth, but, despite the tremendous efforts of the Confederates, the divisions of Thomas stood firm and unbroken. The Confederate lines overlapped those of the Union Army, but such was the slaughter—General Cleburne losing five hundred in a few minutes and one of Breckenridge's brigades being literally swept from the field by the Union fire—the Confederates did not dare to swing

their forces into Thomas' rear. The furious assault swept down the line from left to right and on Thomas' front was repulsed at every point.

But on the right of the army there was no Thomas, and when Longstreet, with his splendid veterans, moved to the attack, instead of finding a strongly posted compact line of battle to contest his advance, he met only disconnected fragments of a line, stationed with flanks exposed, or columns in motion changing position under blind orders blindly obeyed. These he swept before him as a tempest drives the leaves. McCook's divisions, though fighting desperately at great disadvantage, and without hope, were hurled headlong from the field. Crittenden's corps was involved in the rout and the whole right and reserve of the army crushed and rolled in a confused mass of struggling humanity to the rear. The artillery of these corps, unable to manœuvre in the thick forest, and over the broken ground, and deprived of infantry support, was captured, or rushing madly in flight doubled the "confusion, havoc, and dismay."

The commanding general, believing all lost, hastened from the field to Chattanooga to save what he could from what he believed to be overwhelming disaster, and was followed by two of his corps commanders and the routed portion of their forces.

This left Thomas and the five divisions under his immediate command, aided by such fragments of the routed right as, gifted with undaunted courage, and

moved by a noble patriotism, reported to him for duty, notably General Hazen, who moved in with his brigade from Palmer's division of Crittenden's routed corps. With these from noon to night he confronted the whole Confederate Army full of enthusiasm and confident of victory. Here he richly earned the gratitude of the nation and the title of the Rock of Chickamauga.

I cannot go into the details of this tremendous struggle when assault after assault was repulsed, when with both flanks turned and columns of the enemy in the rear, with ammunition almost exhausted, this splendid soldier and his unflinching men held their position and forced back the charging Confederates with awful slaughter. Troops were moved from left to right and from right to left, or faced to the rear as the overwhelming numbers of the enemy bore down upon them, and, without a thought of yielding, this last hope of the Union Army fought on, waiting for night or death. At last the enemy, calling up all remaining reserves, gathered for one final and desperate attempt to break these unyielding lines. Down upon flanks and rear they came in one great enveloping stream of fire and death. It was Bragg's last and crowning effort, and upon its failure or success hung the fate of an army and the future of a nation.

As I have said, General Rosecrans, whose headquarters were on the extreme right, seeing the terrible rout, hurried from the field to Chattanooga. He

had but one thought, and that was to prepare the pontoons over the Tennessee in order to save what he could of his shattered army.

As General Rosecrans and his chief of staff rode to the rear, amid the mass of our panic-stricken men, wounded soldiers on foot and in ambulances, riderless horses, hurrying wagons the teams lashed on by panic-stricken drivers, and all the evidences of a frightful rout, the roar of a deadly conflict was heard on the right of their line of retreat. What could this protracted struggle, under such circumstances, mean? was the question that puzzled the chief of staff, General Garfield, and at his own suggestion he parted from his general and rode to the front.

How common it is, when considering the vicissitudes of life, to find some pivotal point upon which seems to turn the destiny of a fortunate or unfortunate career. Thus, had Rosecrans sent his chief of staff to look after that pontoon bridge, and gone himself to the front, he could have rallied Crittenden's retreating reserve on Rossville, and, strengthening Thomas' left wing, would, undoubtedly, have driven the almost exhausted Confederates from the field. We have had many disquisitions on this, but these philosophers forget that had Rosecrans acted other than he did he would not have been Rosecrans. From the time of his birth until this fatal day at Chickamauga his individuality had been forming for just such an emergency as this. Brutus lingered, in

doubt, at home on the morning of Cæsar's assassination,

> When Rome's proud fortune trembled on
> A dagger's point.

We speculate upon an if, and on a future built on a moment's delay, but we do not see that through generations of men, the blood of despotism and the blood of assassination ran slowly, converging to a point where the two streams met, and that the meeting and its consequences were as much links in the chain of events as the more commonplace occurrences of life.

The turning-point in this gallant soldier's career was no more on that road to Chattanooga, nor as much, as in his infatuated selection of Alec McCook to command the right wing of the Army of the Cumberland. I make no pretension to an extraordinary knowledge of human nature. Having discovered at an early day that I did not know myself I dropped all pretensions to an intuitive knowledge of other men. But the protracted investigation of Buell's brilliant but unfortunate military career brought Alec McCook vividly to view, and the night before Rosecrans moved out of Nashville on the campaign which ended so disastrously to him at Chickamauga I earnestly protested against his trust in McCook. Rosecrans is a frank, brave, truthful soldier, a lovable man, and having served under him in Virginia I could not refrain from taking this liberty with two friends, for Alec McCook is one I number in this list.

Immediately after the battle of Chickamauga, General Garfield passed through Baltimore on his way to Washington as a member-elect of Congress. The Hon. Henry Winter Davis gave him a dinner, to which General Schenck and staff were invited. In eloquent utterances, and with earnest manner, Garfield told that dinner-party the story of the battle.

"It was not a defeat," he said, "but a great victory, only we at headquarters did not know it. It was about three in the afternoon, when riding with General Rosecrans toward Chattanooga, that the continuous roar of a battle on the centre and left, struck us as indicating an obstinate defence and I suggested the propriety of my riding back and ascertaining the exact condition of affairs on Thomas' front. Receiving assent to this, I turned and made my way, as best I could, in the direction of the conflict. It was no easy matter; the road was crowded with fugitives, men, ambulances, and wagons, all bent each on getting ahead of the other out of the way of the yelling rebels. No one inexperienced in such a rout can conceive of the disorganization and wild dismay of such a mass. I succeeded at last, and I shall never forget my amazement and admiration when I beheld that grand officer holding his own with utter defeat on each side and such wild disorder in his rear. He had the moment before repulsed a terrific assault, and his unmoved line of bronzed veterans stood by their

guns as grim and silent as a line of rock. Thomas' greeting to me was as quiet as if on parade, and, on my asking him as to the situation, he replied:

"'We have repulsed every attack so far, and can hold our ground if the enemy can be kept from our rear.'

"He had scarcely uttered these words when the head of a column appeared on our left as we faced to the rear. It came rapidly, the men yelling and firing as they marched; and for a few painful moments we were in doubt whether they were friends or foes. The doubt was dispelled by the appearance of men on the right who seemed to rise from the ground. They came at double time, and we could see and hear the officers cheering them on. It was dear old General Steadman coming to our rescue. They came in column, formed into line, and advanced firing. We saw the enemy hesitate, waver, fall back, and disappear, as at the same moment a terrific assault was made on our front. This, too, was repulsed and again there came the deadly lull, harder to bear than active fighting, for knowing our isolated position, one felt there was no telling from what quarter the next attack would be made. As to this anxiety I speak for myself, my heart was in my mouth, but for Thomas, from first to last he stood unmoved, receiving reports and giving orders, as if the situation were not utterly desperate. Once only he exhibited any feeling. We were moving along the line to encourage the men and

to make inquiry regarding the ammunition, when Thomas approached a man whose coolness and courage he had noticed, and shaking the brave fellow's hand, thanked him for his gallant conduct. The man stood embarrassed for a second, and then exclaimed:

"'General Thomas shook that hand, if any fellow ever tries to take it I'll knock him down.'"

From that hour until night this short line of twenty-five thousand men held the field against the entire rebel army and then fell back in good order to Chattanooga.

Pap Thomas, from that out, became in the hearts and mouths of the men the *Rock* of Chickamauga. That rock is his pedestal of honor, and so long as the memory of the terrible conflict which cemented in blood our people as a nation remains, that monument will grow clearer and brighter against its background of war-clouds, and the able, grand, silent, untainted man will be fairly worshipped when the little tin gods now rattled about among the groundlings are forgotten.

"I will leave it to history to do me justice," he said, and the slow moving hand of the impartial chronicler is at work. History is generally the crystallization of popular beliefs. "It is," said the great Napoleon, "the facts agreed on." If these, the popular beliefs and facts agreed on, were to be settled by the partisans who rule to-day, Thomas would have but scant justice, as little after death as they accorded him

in life. He won his laurels on the blunders of the men who are the heroes of the hour, and they can be recognized only in obscuring him. Fortunately these noisy worshippers make but a part of the American nation, while amid the English-speaking people, of which these blind devotees are a small minority, history will speak, and the history to which he appealed will do his memory justice.

### AT LAST IN COMMAND.

The immediate displacement of Rosecrans was as unjust as the manner of doing it was brutal.

All our popular generals, save one, rose to eminence on the bodies of the brave fellows their blunders sacrificed. Had the same justice been rendered them that was shot at the head of Rosecrans by telegraph, Grant and Sherman would have terminated their military careers at Shiloh. We learned war from defeat, and made generals out of our disasters. Indeed up to this time Rosecrans had won more fights and suffered fewer defeats than his rivals who did not hesitate to sit in judgment on him, and join his vindictive enemy of the War Department in howling him down.

To this course there was one exception. Thomas had put himself on record as opposing and protesting against the one move that culminated in the ruin of his general. His kindness of heart, and love for his profession, and his high sense of honor rebelled against the injustice done General Rosecrans

and the brutality of its execution. He refused to accept the command tendered, and when, at last, it was forced upon him he made his first act an expression of admiration for, and confidence in, his late commander. This was in accepting Rosecrans' first move on falling back to Chattanooga, and not only proceeding to put it in execution, but giving his late general full credit for its ingenious inception.

Under cover of Thomas' invincibles the army was once more in Chattanooga, and the first vital question that demanded solution from the brain of the commander was how to keep the troops supplied. The only line left open was a mountain road sixty miles in length, so wretchedly bad that horses and mules fell exhausted and died by the hundreds.

The great War Secretary had roared so wrathfully and loud over Rosecrans' blunders that a panic existed at Washington, and at the headquarters of our Virginia Army, lest Rosecrans should evacuate Chattanooga and run away. The man who had been trusted in the most perilous and important enterprises, who had scored more victories to his credit than any other officer in the field, that this man would lose both head and heart was not supposable, and that Edwin M. Stanton entertained such an idea, only proves that when he became blind through prejudice and passion he was stone blind. Under the impulse thus given, General Grant telegraphed Thomas:

"Hold Chattanooga at all hazards."

The response was characteristic; it read:

"We will hold the town till we starve."

In this Thomas spoke for the brave men under his command. He had mingled with them, shared their blankets and rations, had studied their nature, and knew that they would stand by him unflinching under the fires of hell, and, if so ordered, would eat their own shoes before surrendering. How he loved those men! In the grand review, at Washington, after the war, when his bronzed veterans swung by this silent man, who so controlled his emotions that in the hour of deadly peril he appeared quiet and self-composed as when on parade, he said, through a mist of tears, "They made me." Modest to the last, he did not add, as he might have done, "And I made them." Taking the raw recruits, as he told the writer of this, "The best material on earth," he not only moulded it into soldierly efficiency, but infused into the ranks his own heroic qualities that made his men like the Old Guard of Napoleon, the terror of a continent.

How to save that army, shut up in Chattanooga, from starvation taxed the brain of the great commander.

General Longstreet, after the battle of Chattanooga, suggested to General Bragg that they should cross the Tennessee River east of Chattanooga, and by operating northward force Rosecrans to fall back on Nashville. After that to follow the railroad to

Knoxville, defeat Burnside, and then from that point move on our army in Middle Tennessee.

Looking back now, one sees clearly that this was the thing to do. But Braxton Bragg was not equal to the emergency. He lost the fruits of his victory in an attempt to besiege Chattanooga. He left out the important facts that Hooker held the line of supplies, and Thomas was in command of the army he proposed starving. From Stone River, where he experienced the fighting qualities of our men under Thomas, he seems to have lost all the enterprise and dash that distinguished him in cutting loose from his base of supplies, and with an inferior army forcing Buell back on the Ohio and defeating us at Perryville.

Now when General Rosecrans fell back from the battlefield of Chickamauga to Chattanooga he found Lookout Valley and all the south side of the river in possession of the Confederates, cutting off the available lines of supplies, and the problem presented the Government general, as I have said, was how to save his army from starvation.

General Rosecrans, a man of genius, solved the problem, and, strange to say, with ease. Success in the field depends greatly in doing the unexpected. There is a mystery in the unknown, as General Wm. Preston, of Kentucky, said to me once, that is terror, and makes the wild elephant fly from the first man it encounters. What Rosecrans proposed could have been easily defeated had Bragg been aware of his design. One brigade in a movement that would

have taken not more than twenty minutes could have rendered the execution of the plan impossible. But Bragg encountered the unexpected and failed.

Before old Rosey could put his plan in operation he was superseded by General Thomas and General Thomas found himself under the orders of Grant, who, in the panic developed at the War Department by Secretary Stanton, had hurried to Chattanooga. It appeared at one time that the entire Government would migrate to that stronghold. The War Department got as far as Louisville, moved by its wild fear, not of Bragg, but of Rosecrans.

General Grant accepted the proposed plan. He had his choice between that and starvation. It was a simple affair, but daring as it was simple, and consisted merely in dropping a force down the river, after night, in boats of a pontoon bridge to be thrown across the stream at Brown's Ferry. Now from Moccasin Point to the ferry in question, a distance of nearly three miles, the enemy had their picket posts on the edge of the river.

The fifteen hundred men embarked upon the pontoons were put under command of Gen. Hazen, a brave, brainy man, eminently fit to manage such a hazardous expedition. Gen. Turchin, another brave and capable officer, was ordered to coöperate by marching with his brigade and a battery across the peninsula formed by the river, while Gen. Hooker, advised by telegraph, promised to put his command into Lookout Valley in time to support the movement.

For once in the history of our war, three different commands, moving from three different points, concentrated successfully upon an objective, and Bragg awakened in the morning to the fact that relief had penetrated his siege, and that the army in Chattanooga under command of the ablest general of the Government, George Henry Thomas, was not only secure but in a condition to threaten the Confederacy from that important strategic point.

One cannot help dwelling on that movement at the dead hour of midnight as it floated in silence down the swift river. Hugging the right bank, it swept by the camp-fires of the foe, every second laden with the fate of mighty armies, when a shout, a word even, or a broken oar would have aroused the enemy, and sunk our boats.

Our blessed American people have short memories, and in the hurry of great events, treading many upon the heels of others, the man who planned and the man who executed this daring and important movement seem forgotten. Rosecrans passed under a cloud, mostly smoke from the War Department, out of the army and the fort he saved, to be abused, while the gallant Hazen has since been fairly pilloried before the public by low malice and envy.

### SIEGE OF CHATTANOOGA.

After Rosecrans' daring operation had been perfected and the line opened not only for supplies but reinforcements, Bragg moved on the suggestion of

Longstreet and detached that able officer with his corps to defeat Burnside at Knoxville.

When Thomas proposed to penetrate East Tennessee through Knoxville and cut one of the Confederate lines of supply, that city was an objective of some importance. But now that Chattanooga was held by our forces Burnside was not only of no importance in Knoxville, but a standing menace of danger to our cause. But the maggot of territory was working in the military brain, and it was blind to the fact that the territory was held at the headquarters of three Confederate armies; one under Lee at Richmond, another under Bragg at Chattanooga, and a third under Kirby Smith, west of the Mississippi.

Grant at Chattanooga was troubled in his military mind by this territorial craze, and his plans for offensive operations were shaped by his ideas in this behalf. He accordingly ordered Thomas to make an attack on the northeastern end of Missionary Ridge with all the troops he could bring to bear, and so force Bragg to recall Longstreet. Thomas saw the utter absurdity of this move, and so remonstrated.

General Grant, in his report and other official utterances at the time, gives the true history of this affair and the proof is ample that the action of General Thomas was wise and judicious.

Badeau, busily engaged in building up the military reputation of one man at the expense of another, indulges in grave misrepresentations, and quotes General Sherman to substantiate his statements.

Both Badeau and Sherman make their deep-sea soundings with a pack-thread, and it is not their fault that they failed to do better. They could not comprehend the man who, untainted by mean ambition, had an eye single to success, and calmly discounted obstacles when ordered to accomplish the impossible. But we cannot forgive them for deliberately putting lies to record as history, and it is astounding that they should dare to do so with overwhelming evidence of the truth before them.

The proud, silent, sensitive man had, from the promptings of patriotism, severed the ties of family and friendship, but he possessed that honorable ambition ever felt by genius, when realizing its superiority over associates of ordinary ability. General Thomas knew that in command of the brave fellows he had trained to love and obey him he could find the enemy and defeat him without any of the bloody disasters that had shamed us before the world. Stung to the quick and sick at heart from the injustice done him, and the lack of confidence shown in his loyalty by the Government, he said: "I will protest no more. I serve hereafter under any one ordered over me, and in any field designated, without complaint," and crowding down his disappointment and disgust he went quietly about his work, taking orders from his inferiors with an apparently patient indifference that was called "shrinking from responsibility."

It is painful, even now, to look back through that

hour of peril to us as a nation, read the shameful record of blunders and the frightful butchery of brave men, and realize that walking unnoticed among the padded, epauletted incapables was the great war genius of our continent, a greater than Napoleon, for to his knowledge of war he added a patriotism that immolated self upon the altar of his country.

The more exasperating memory is the complacent, patronizing toleration of the incapables who happened to be in command when the great Confederacy, after a gigantic struggle, fell from sheer exhaustion.

### MISSIONARY RIDGE.

Well, the war went on. Sherman at last came up with the Army of the Tennessee, and Grant felt strong enough to assume the offensive. Bragg, who, on throwing his lines around Chattanooga, found the impregnable defences weak from a lack of men to man them, had permitted the golden opportunity to slip from his grasp. Had Thomas executed Grant's blind order to attack the extremity of Missionary Ridge he would have so weakened his long line of defence as to have given Bragg his choice of point of attack. Now the advantages were reversed, and with nearly a third more men added to the Government forces and his own weakened by Longstreet's detachment, Bragg found that not only was the offensive impossible, but even the defensive in doubt.

To the curious student who delves carefully through a war's history there are no more amusing pieces of military literature than the reports of commanding generals after engagements. If a victory is put thus on record the solemn recorder takes all the credit to himself, with patronizing reference to subordinates who faithfully executed his sagacious orders and the men who did the fighting. If, on the contrary, it is an undoubted disaster, the blame is shifted to the shoulders of said subordinates who failed to execute and the men who failed to fight out said judicious plans.

The battle or battles that drove Bragg from Missionary Ridge and Lookout Mountain illustrate this. Grant, who had the merit of being a fighting character, and believed in himself, planned one engagement and his subordinate officers and men fought to a successful conclusion quite another. The orders, like Jack Cade's bricks, are there to testify, so deny it not. But Grant, Sherman, and the erudite Badeau do deny, and all join in a record that gives the general commanding (Grant) the credit of the result.

One can understand Sherman in this, for the war was fought from beginning to end by this wonderful man, if we are to believe his own story, while all the credit he cannot take to himself by reason of absence or other slight obstacle he graciously gives to Grant. Nor can we fail to appreciate the literary Badeau, for he is a recognized author of fiction. But Grant's ap-

proval of Badeau's "Military History," with his own orders so clearly contradicting the so-called historical statements, is inexplicable unless it be accounted for by the general, in common with the rest of mankind, having failed to read what Badeau had written.

It was Grant's purpose to have Sherman turn Bragg's right. This was supplemented by directing Hooker to turn his left, while Thomas' command should make a demonstration against his centre, which was supposed to be impregnable.

Now Sherman did not successfully turn Bragg's right, and though Hooker drove in his left he was brought to a stand-still by Chickamauga Creek, which presented an impassable barrier until he could throw bridges across and pass his troops over to press his attack. But the centre under Thomas, with its divisions commanded by Wood, Baird, and Sheridan, not only demonstrated against the steep, rocky, cannon-crowned heights, but, to the amazement of the general commanding who witnessed the scene, charged up the apparently perpendicular palisades without orders from him, and drove the Confederates from their works.

The fact is that the men ordered to make the demonstration found themselves called to a halt at the base of Missionary Ridge. The position was untenable. The officers in command had their choice to make the desperate advance or to retreat. To remain where Grant's orders left them was assured death to

the whole command. It did not take these brave fellows long to decide. As I have said, they charged up and carried the heights before them. Who among them gave the order, if any one, is not known. It is known, however, that Hazen's brigade led, were the first upon the ridge, first to capture guns and turn them upon the enemy.

Grant and Thomas stood together, surrounded by their staff officers, when this unexpected assault upon the enemy's centre was made. Grant turned fiercely upon Thomas.

"Who gave that order?" he demanded. "No one that I know of," responded Thomas quietly. "It is, however, the thing to do."

"It shall be investigated," said Grant, little dreaming that volumes would be written, published and claimed to be approved by him, trying to show that this grand success was a preconceived idea of his own.

These were the men of the Army of the Cumberland, the same columns that marched under Buell in through the mass of panic-stricken fugitives at Shiloh, and swung their eagles to victory on the field of defeat the men who won at Stone River, and that day showed themselves worthy to be commanded by the Rock of Chickamauga.

It was the result of the training of brave men under fire until they were brought to know that they could march and fight equally with, if not superior to any force in the field, and to feel that so long as they

touched elbows and faced the enemy under the command of the man they loved and believed in they were irresistible.

This was the lesson of the war, and, dull students that we are, the lesson seems lost. A commander can make or mar an army. McClellan, for example, organized and trained his forces for defeat. For nearly a year he drilled his men to avoid engagements. With an inferior force lying in sight, his one comforting bulletin was, "All quiet on the Potomac." Instead of training his white-gloved battalions to the actualities of war, he developed a mysterious awe of the unknown that lay beyond the intrenchments and guns of the enemy. When that wretched blunder of Ball's Bluff occurred he hastened to imprison and persecute a capable, noble-hearted subordinate, and spread an actual panic through his entire army.

Small wonder that his cotton-gloved divisions were tumbled back from before Richmond, and all thanked God with pious fervor that they were safe again behind the fortifications of Washington.

The philosophy of the victories at the West is to be found in the fact and the reason for it, that our brave fellows were taught to believe in themselves through training under fire.

I remember vividly the impression made upon me after leaving our army in Virginia, and living with that of the West at Nashville. I found myself not only among men of a different sort, but men who seemed to breathe a different atmosphere. The awe

that amounted almost to fear in the armies of the East had no existence among the men of the West; but there was a spirit that thought, spoke, and treated the foe with an indifference that amounted to contempt. The *morale* was superb, and had it been accompanied throughout by the drill and discipline given to part by General Thomas, we would have won every battle, even over the blunders of commanding generals. But the indifference of the men became recklessness in the officers, and our brave fellows often, on the most trying occasions, found themselves unavailing food for powder.

### THE ATLANTA CAMPAIGN.

Much praise and a wide popularity have been awarded General Sherman for his campaign from Chattanooga to Atlanta. This campaign not only condoned for the follies and frightful disasters of his past, but gave him *carte-blanche* for any folly or imprudence he might perpetrate in the future.

Newspaper editors who have no time, and the masses who have no inclination to study are unanimous in regarding the Atlanta Campaign as a brilliant success and Tecumseh Sherman as the greatest general our continent ever produced. The much-used maxim from the French, that there is nothing that succeeds like success, in its real signification is applicable to this man and his military career. What the shrewd Frenchman meant was the

confounding of sham success with real achievement in the popular mind. To the impartial student of military history this campaign was something of which the patriotic mind should be ashamed.

General Sherman marched out with one hundred thousand men, and they were veterans. He had under him such men as Thomas, McPherson, Davis, Palmer, Logan, Stanley, Hazen, and Hooker, the flower of American military ability, and all that the power and wealth of a great government could supply was poured out to him with unsparing hand. Thomas' army alone, under Thomas, could have marched to Richmond. Sherman's armies were in good health, armed with the best material Yankee ingenuity could invent and perfect, and the brave fellows were ready to march wherever ordered.

Opposed to this splendidly equipped force was the Army of the Confederacy under Jos. E. Johnson, numbering really all told not over sixty thousand men. They were poorly clad, worse fed, badly supplied with arms and ammunition, and with all life for the contest taken out of them, for the Confederacy was falling as rapidly as it had risen. They closed up their thin lines with no hope of reinforcements, and, although one is forced to admit that they fought to the end with courage and endurance which the world will never appreciate, this one hundred thousand men under Sherman ought to have defeated them and taken Atlanta without great loss. There was no point between the two places such as Chatta-

nooga, where the Confederate general could make a hopeful stand, no place where he could escape being flanked upon one or both sides. Had a capable general, such as Thomas, been in command that would have been the result. As it was, counting the casualties of our army, we find that Sherman lost in killed and wounded, died and missing, about two-thirds the number of troops Johnson had under his command. In a word, Sherman bought Atlanta with the blood of thirty-five thousand of the gallant fellows who marched under our colors. This is called a brilliant campaign, and on this rests the fame of our popular general. Brilliant it was with the hue of patriotic blood, but in no other way.

It is a little strange to note the change in popular feeling brought about during this terrible war. When it began, as I have told, the gallant General Schenck—and a more capable officer never lived—lost ten men while obeying written orders from a superior officer. The roar of wrathful indignation that went up over the land at the sacrifice of human life was something amazing. General Schenck was denounced, ridiculed, and abused by the press and the people to such an extent that, had it not been for his indomitable will, he would have been driven from the service. Three years thereafter General Sherman builds his reputation upon the wanton slaughter of thousands of our best men.

The blundering stupidity of this campaign is made manifest in the history of the very first move.

General Sherman consulted General Thomas as to a plan of campaign, but unfortunately did not follow his advice. The hero of Chickamauga quietly traced upon the map a proposition that bade fair to annihilate the enemy. Johnson's army, between fifty and sixty thousand strong, lay in front of Dalton, Georgia, manning the almost inaccessible heights and passes of Rocky Face Ridge and Buzzard Roost, with a small force of about three thousand men stationed at the fortified town of Resaca to hold his communications secure. Thomas proposed to throw his Army of the Cumberland, sixty thousand strong, through Snake Creek Gap, which he knew to be unguarded, in the rear of Johnson on his line of communication, between Dalton and Resaca, while Sherman held him at Dalton with the remainder of his forces. In this way the Confederate commander would be forced to fight Thomas at a disadvantage or, abandoning Dalton and his communications, retreat eastward through a rough and broken country, where his army would have been cut to pieces or disorganized. General Thomas was confident that should the Confederates turn on him he could defeat them with the Army of the Cumberland alone, as he had done before. This plan Sherman refused to adopt, alleging as a reason that he desired to hold Thomas' army as a rallying-point for the other two armies, though what he wanted with such rallying-point, unless he expected his other two armies that numbered about as many men as Johnson had to

run away, is hard to understand. We are forced to attribute Sherman's wilfulness to the jealousy felt by a general who never won a victory toward one who never suffered a defeat.

Sherman, however, was forced to accept enough of this plan to rob Thomas of the credit and himself of success. He sent the Army of the Tennessee, twenty-three thousand strong, under General McPherson, through Snake Creek Gap, not to throw themselves in the rear of Johnson as Thomas proposed, but with orders to destroy the railroad between Dalton and Resaca, then to fall back on Snake Creek Gap and lie in readiness to attack Johnson's flank as he passed in retreat from Dalton on this line kindly left open for him, as, doubtless, Sherman expected him to do.

What was the good of all this no man can understand, and the only effect of McPherson's feeble effort was to demonstrate the wisdom of Thomas' plan. He found the gap occupied by a slight force which he brushed aside, and marched within a mile and a half of the Confederate intrenchments at Resaca, which for three days after his appearance were manned by not more than three thousand infantry. Having thus warned the enemy of what might befall him, that gallant officer, having executed his order, fell back on Snake Creek Gap and fortified. Had Thomas with his sixty thousand men been there in McPherson's stead, as he proposed, he would have occupied and held Resaca to the utter ruin of the Confederate general.

Sherman, having executed this brilliant manœuvre, made some active demonstrations against the mountain-sides which he could not scale, and would have remained there, probably to this day if the Committee on the Conduct of the War could have found patience for such delay, had not Johnson discovered the insecurity of his own position, through the feeble demonstration of McPherson, and fallen back to his fortifications at Resaca with the loss of but few men.

Here is an anecdote illustrative of Thomas' character: When he heard that McPherson had given as an excuse for not throwing his army in the rear of Johnson, that the dense forest prevented it, he quietly remarked: "Where were their axes?" and a day or so after, large portions of the army marched through this same impassable woods.

This mistake at Resaca was but the beginning of a hundred days of campaigning made up of blunders and disasters, which nothing but the overwhelming numbers of the Union Army, the ability of Sherman's subordinates, and the endurance and gallantry of his men enabled him to carry to a successful termination, which was accomplished at last in spite of his terrible errors.

The battle of Resaca, with its direct, bloody, and ineffectual attacks on the Confederates' intrenched position, ended in Johnson's again withdrawing in good order, although Sherman had a bridge and every opportunity to put his army in his rear and cut off his retreat.

The combined Union armies moved in pursuit southward toward Cassville, Georgia. Johnson was disposed to accept battle north of the Etowah River, but being dissuaded by his corps commanders, retreated behind that stream to Allatoona Pass, where he began to gather slight reinforcements, and Sherman paused in his pursuit to rest his men.

The only action worthy of record on this march was the capture of Rome, Georgia, with its immense machine-shops and iron-works, great stores of cotton, and some artillery. This was accomplished by General Jeff. C. Davis, commanding a division of General Thomas' army. This, Davis, who with all of Thomas' subordinates had been trained never to lose an opportunity to hurt the enemy, did without orders from the Commander-in-Chief, and as far as that Commander-in-Chief was concerned Rome and its plant, so valuable to the Confederacy, might have remained intact to this day.

General Sherman laid waste the property of the private citizen, and blackened the heavens with the smoke of burning dwellings and cotton-gins, but the property especially valuable to the Confederate Government he treated with great consideration, as witness this case of Rome, and that of the great Confederate arsenals and ammunition factories at Augusta.

After a few days' rest Sherman crossed the Etowah with his three armies and moved to turn Johnson's left flank, Allatoona Pass being a fortified position of great strength.

At New Hope Church he ordered an assault on Johnson's intrenched lines, which resulted in the usual slaughter with no compensating gains. In this assault the National forces lost fifteen hundred men killed and wounded, the Confederates less than one-third that number.

Having thus failed, Sherman moved toward the enemy's flank and Johnson fell slowly back, holding every point to the last, until he threw himself within his heavily fortified lines extending from Kenesaw to Pine Mountain. This was a position impregnable in front, the record of which fact Sherman, to gratify his personal vanity, insisted on writing upon the rebel parapets in Union blood.

Selecting perhaps the strongest point along the Confederate lines on Kenesaw Mountain he ordered an assault in force.

General Thomas who thoroughly understood the condition of affairs in front, the great strength of the enemy's intrenchments, and who never hesitated to put his gallant veterans into action when there was any assurance of success, opposed this order. On the other hand, he suggested that the Army of the Tennessee, McPherson commanding, be ordered to advance against Johnson's position from the north, where the way was open.

Nothwithstanding his protest and wise advice Thomas was peremptorily ordered to make the assault. It was a desperate piece of work, costing fearfully in the loss of valuable officers and fifteen

hundred men, and giving nothing in return for the sacrifice. The Confederate loss was only one hundred and thirty-six killed and wounded.

General Thomas, in reporting the result, said: "We have already lost heavily to-day without gaining any material advantage. One or two more such assaults would use up this army."

Again replying to Sherman's request for his opinion regarding a flank movement he said: "What force do you propose moving with? If with the greatest part of the army, I think it decidedly better than butting against breastworks twelve feet thick and strongly abattised."

These opinions from a soldier of transcendent ability and iron nerve, who had with his devoted men faced fearful odds in what seemed to be a hopeless struggle at Chickamauga, ought to be sufficient comment on Sherman's mad course. And let it be remembered that they are not quoted from *memoirs* written in piping times of peace, but from official communications made to his commander and for which he was, as a soldier, responsible.

But if anything further is needed it will be found in Sherman's attempted explanation of his bloody attack and wretched failure, which he made to General Halleck. He says:

"The assault I made was no mistake; I had to do it. The enemy and our own army and officers had settled down into the conviction that the assault of lines formed no part of my game, and the moment

the enemy was found behind anything like a parapet, why, everybody would deploy, throw up counter-works, and take it easy, leaving it to the 'Old Man' to turn the position."

As for "taking it easy," the bone-marked lines and blood-stained intrenchments from Tunnel Hill to Lovejoy Station, tell a different story. But here is a man who, urged on by his mad ambition and insane vanity, in the face of the advice and opposition of his ablest officer, sends whole brigades of devoted men against impregnable works, and devotes the very flower of his countrymen, without the hope or chance of material gain in any way, merely to gratify a personal whim. He was willing and anxious to sacrifice the lives of any number of his men to ward off a possible suspicion that he was over-cautious and afraid to assault intrenched lines. He should have led the assault in person, as that would probably have resulted in placing General Thomas in command of the armies, which would, in some degree, have compensated for the bloody cost.

Said an eminent Union officer, now a pet of his party in Ohio: "So far as that wanton slaughter of our troops was concerned, it had its origin in Sherman's heartless vanity. As we marched on, gaining almost bloodless triumphs through superior numbers that enabled us to flank the enemy at every stand taken, Grant was having bloody fights that filled the newspapers with sensations. This was too much for Sherman, and he immediately ordered an assault

that was so utterly hopeless that he should have been court-martialled for murder. But his point was gained. The newspapers were laden with a tremendous battle at Kenesaw Mountain under Sherman, and the men who died and the men who crawled home crippled for life were the victims of his insane ambition.

"He was in error when he wrote Halleck to the effect that officers and men had concluded that the old man would not fight. The fatal conclusion that officers and men had arrived at was that the old man could not fight. All we accomplished was done by the old man's subordinate officers in spite of him."

Failing in this desperate attack Sherman did what he should have done before, moved his right flank in order to force Johnson to evacuate his unassailable lines. In this he succeeded.

The command of the Confederate Army was transferred to General Hood, and that bold and dashing officer, assuming the offensive with great vigor and impetuosity in front of Atlanta, endeavored to execute a plan conceived by General Johnson to defeat and crush the Army of the Cumberland as it advanced across Peach Tree Creek. His action was well and skilfully planned and carried into execution with great courage, but it failed utterly. Hood fell with great fury upon the Army of the Cumberland as it was crossing the stream, and though Thomas had been weakened by the detachment of Wood's and Stanley's divisions, he was

hurled back with fearful slaughter and without, from first to last, gaining a single advantage. General Thomas was in the thickest of the fight, directing his artillery in person, and, by his personal presence and prompt action, saved the flank of his army. Here Thomas proved the truth of his words, when he asked permission to throw his army in Johnson's rear at Resaca, that he could defeat the Confederate Army with the Army of the Cumberland alone.

This defeat was a terrible blow to the enemy, who after an unavailing, despairing struggle fell back southward, leaving Atlanta to fall into the hands of the National armies.

No impartial reader can review the history of this campaign without seeing and acknowledging that whenever General Thomas' advice and plans were followed success was assured, and whenever his advice was set at naught disaster was the result.

### FRANKLIN AND NASHVILLE.

The military gentlemen who have indulged in memoirs, and the so-called historians who have given us books on the war, have omitted the larger facts connected with the struggle. It will sound strange to such, and to a majority of my readers, when I say that the Confederacy was never so near success as at the time when Sherman's army took Atlanta, and Grant was driving in the enemy at Richmond.

It was to the Confederates the darkest hour that precedes the morn, only owing to George H. Thomas that morn never dawned. To understand this we have to know that from the first firing on Sumter to the last gun at Appomattox the Confederate Government had rested its last and highest hope, and reasonably so, on European interference. They had counted correctly on the fact that Cotton was king. The dethronement, for the time being, of that monarch not only paralyzed trade at home, but sent distress to every trading mart the world over. That in England, France, and Germany was greater than in the United States, for here, possessed of an inflated currency that strangely held its own, the Government was in the market as a purchaser of all the produce North and West. The reaction to this at home did not come on until 1876, but in Europe the distress had no such source of relief. The sympathies of the aristocracy in England and of the military Government of France were on the side of the Confederates. In this they were sustained by the traders who felt the oppression of the war.

For three years during the strife the South had its ablest advocates in Europe negotiating for the interference to which it was entitled in the first year of the conflict. England through her cautious policy of late years hesitated, while Russia dallied with the temptation. The most active, bitter, and influential of the war powers abroad acting against us was that under Louis Napoleon. Having completed

his combination with all the Governments abroad, except England, the emperor threw an army into Mexico for the avowed purpose of setting up an imperial government, but really intending to make Mexico a base of operations in behalf of the Confederacy against the United States. His aid, although offered early, came late and at a moment when the Confederacy was about to fall from exhaustion. It was calculated at Richmond that if a brilliant stroke could be accomplished, however mad and futile it might appear so far as the mere Confederacy was concerned, it would not only strengthen the purpose of Louis Napoleon, but revive again the drooping spirits of such Northern Democrats as opposed the war.

To this end it was purposed to have Hood move his entire army from before Sherman and make an advance to the Ohio River. It was counted that the effect of this would be to force Sherman back, as they had before forced back Buell to our northern border.

Wherever the Confederate Army appeared, for whatever purpose it might have in view, it was necessary to meet it with an army of the Government. Until the armed forces of the Confederacy were destroyed or captured the war would, of course, go on.

While the authorities at Richmond were preparing for this desperate move, an event of the most extraordinary character occurred, that is when looked at from a military point of view, that ever happened in any war.

General Sherman with sixty thousand men suddenly disappeared from the front. Had the earth opened and swallowed the entire force it could not have more effectually been removed from its legitimate field of operations.

It seems that General Thomas had suggested to his commander, Sherman, that he be permitted to take his little army of three corps and march across Georgia, destroying Augusta and moving on to the aid of Grant at Richmond. It appears that Sherman seized on this bold proposition and proceeded at once to put it in execution, but, as always, with enough difference to insure its ruin. Sherman was troubled with the fear that having accomplished all that could be done at Atlanta, he would be ordered with the bulk of his forces to Richmond to serve under Grant. To avoid this he marched his army from the front to fight the Georgia militia, and waste time in a useless march to the sea, and the authorities at Richmond found themselves presented with an extraordinary opening for their move to the Ohio.

Hood had under his command for the purpose some fifty thousand men, as a desperate effort had been made to augment his forces for this expedition.

Sherman had scarcely disappeared before a panic broke out at Washington, and spread through the country, even to the headquarters of the imperturbable, immovable Grant before Richmond. They all knew that nothing stood in the way of Hood's success but the name of Thomas. This officer had been left

with about twenty-two thousand men, scattered from Knoxville, Tennessee, to Florence, Alabama. Beside this he had been ordered to garrison and hold all the important points gained at the cost of so much blood and treasure, in order that Andy Johnson might continue Governor of Tennessee.

It was thoroughly known at Washington, as well as at headquarters before Richmond, that Kirby Smith had been ordered to cross the Mississippi and join his forces to those of Hood, and he was on his way for that purpose when Sherman disappeared. To augment the terrors of the situation this all occurred late in the fall, when the concentration of the twenty-two thousand was difficult, and appeared impossible.

It looked to the authorities at Washington, cognizant of all the facts, that there was really nothing in the way of Hood's advance to the Ohio, and they well knew that such a bold stroke successfully played would revive the dying fortunes of the Confederates by inviting an invasion from Mexico by the French. One has only to read the telegrams, now of record, that poured in upon Thomas, to realize that that great man had thrown upon him for the third time the salvation of the Union. To vindicate the fact, I have so frequently asserted, that of all the military men doing service for the Govermnent Thomas alone is entitled to the position of first and foremost, I want nothing more than these telegrams. They tell their story in the brief wording of the wire that

seems to have vibrated with fear and anxiety. Another fact goes to confirm this statement, and it is a most deplorable one. Owing to the poverty of the Confederacy the prisoners taken by its armies were subject not only to the most painful privation, but were dying of disease and from exposure. The Government at Washington, from a sense of humanity alone, was hurrying through exchanges as rapidly as they could be arranged, when Grant telegraphed Secretary Stanton that if this were continued and thirty thousand healthy Confederates added to the armies of the South it would prove the ruin of Sherman. There seemed to be more anxiety at headquarters over Sherman than about Thomas. This, however, is easily accounted for, as, in addition to the foregoing facts, there remained the further one that the general commanding at Richmond had sanctioned the March to the Sea, and must therefore have been held responsible for the ruinous results that stared the Government in the face.

During all this, General Thomas, regardless of the clamor about him, proceeded calmly yet swiftly to collect the detachments of his little army upon which so much depended. He knew, as was also well known at Washington, that he could count on no reinforcements, save A. J. Smith's division from Missouri, which was slow in coming. Every man at the command of the War Department had been sent to Grant and Sherman, and the last named had not only deprived Thomas of all the troops he dared take,

but had dismounted the cavalry and unhorsed the artillery that he left behind to mount his own troops, and marched away. We cannot wonder at the consternation felt at Washington and before Richmond, but we do wonder at the cool, quiet courage of the man, who, without complaint or remonstrance of any sort, proceeded to do the best he could under circumstances that would have discouraged one of less heroic mould.

Sherman turned his back, leaving Hood on the banks of the Tennessee with no force in position to dispute his crossing. It is said in defence of Sherman, who was then within a short distance of the Confederate Army, that he expected Hood to follow him. Why the Confederate general should do this puzzles one to understand. He could as well have disbanded his army as have been guilty of any such folly. On the contrary, with the country left at his mercy, even without the expected co-operation of the French emperor, he could by crossing the Tennessee cut the communications with Chattanooga and Atlanta and, moving on toward the Ohio, have undone in one bloodless campaign all that the Government had accomplished in a three years' expenditure of blood and treasure.

Sherman abandoning his only proper objective, Hood's army, marched away with the bulk of the Army of the West splendidly equipped. Hood lay on the south bank of the Tennessee with the crossing at Florence in his grasp, his command, to use his

own words, "entirely recovered from the depression created by frequent retreats," intact, and but slightly, if at all, reduced in numbers.

Between Hood and Nashville, when his intentions were finally fully developed, on his immediate front were four small brigades of cavalry and, guarding a line fifty miles in length from north of Pulaski to Centreville on Duck River, eighteen thousand infantry under General Schofield. His instructions from General Thomas were to fight at Pulaski if the enemy advanced against him in that direction, but if Hood endeavored to turn his flank he was to concentrate his command at Columbia on the line of Duck River. Thomas was striving to hinder and delay Hood until he could unite his forces from the scattered garrisons with recruits from the North and the troops promised from Missouri, and then confronting the Confederate general offer a decisive battle.

General Hood, after putting his army north of the Tennessee, pushed forward and forced Schofield back upon Columbia. The Missouri reinforcements under A. J. Smith were much delayed, and the new recruits from the North and colored troops reporting to Thomas did not more than fill the places vacated by veterans discharged by reason of expiration of service or sent home to vote, and it was necessary to retard Hood's advance as much as possible.

Hood moved on Columbia and put in execution his plan to hold Schofield at that point by a feigned

attack upon his front; while crossing Duck River he would throw seven divisions of infantry and a heavy force of cavalry in the Union rear, and so annihilate or capture Schofield's little army. He succeeded admirably in deceiving Schofield, a general open to such treatment, placed his troops exactly where he intended and, but for the remarkable energy of General Stanley, the errors of Hood's corps commanders, and an almost miraculous combination of circumstances would have captured Schofield's entire command and assured the success of his northward march.

General Thomas' instructions to Schofield at this stage were, that if he could not hold Columbia he should fall back and take up a new position at Franklin. Schofield believed, as witness his own report, that Hood had at least between forty or fifty thousand men. On the 28th of November his cavalry commander reported that Hood was crossing Duck River in force and moving on his rear. At 3.30 A.M. of the 29th, General Thomas instructed him by telegraph, "I desire you to fall back from Columbia and take up your position at Franklin."

Hood, having crossed the river, moved at the head of his army at daybreak and placed seven of his divisions twelve miles in Schofield's rear, on his line of retreat to Franklin, at Springhills. During this movement of the enemy, regardless of General Thomas' order, General Schofield was leisurely waiting further information. Half of one division of his

army was down Duck River, and the remainder of his command strung along the Franklin Pike from Columbia to Springhills, with General Stanley and one division of the old Fourth Corps in advance. At 3 P.M. General Schofield started from Columbia with his rear division for Springhills. At that very hour Hood, with his seven divisions, was in sight of the town, and had ordered Cheatham's corps to take and hold the Franklin Pike while he moved the remaining four divisions to his support. Here, then, were seven Confederate divisions, closed up within supporting distance, with Schofield's line of retreat almost in their grasp, and that general's three divisions stretched over twelve miles of road, and encumbered with heavy trains.

Fortunately for the safety of the Union Army, which seemed hopelessly involved, General Stanley with one division of the Fourth Corps of Thomas' old Army of the Cumberland entered Springhills from the south as Hood's army moved on the place from the west.

Deploying two brigades in a long, thin, weak line to cover the town, he sent forward the remaining brigade to cover the approaches and contest the advance of the Confederates. Here, at this critical moment, was one division against nearly the whole Confederate Army, with the fate of Thomas' command, the failure or success of Hood's campaign, and the very salvation of the nation depending on its steadiness and courage. And a most gallant and obstinate

defence they made, holding the line from the early afternoon until 7 P.M., when Schofield arrived seven hours behind the Confederate general.

Schofield's little army had then, when night fell, seven divisions of the enemy on its front and flank and two pressing hard upon its rear, while its train of five hundred wagons and artillery had to pass close along and in front of the enemy's lines, in order to escape toward Nashville. Thanks to the splendid skill of General Stanley, and the coolness of his men, the little army passed under the guns, and in sight of the camps of the enemy, and fell rapidly back upon Franklin.

There was not time to cross the Harpath River before Hood's exulting Confederates, now moving in hot pursuit, should be upon them; part of the National Army, therefore, faced about and took position south of Franklin, with their flanks resting upon the river, and hastily threw up intrenchments to cover the crossing of the trains and hold the enemy in check until night should enable the whole force to withdraw.

Here, considering the time it lasted, occurred one of the most remarkable and bloodiest actions, and to the Confederates one of the most signal disasters of the war.

The Union forces were posted in a single intrenched line, with only one brigade in reserve, and with two brigades stationed in the open field, covered only by a slight breastwork, a third of a mile in

front of the main line. The position of these brigades was a grave error and came near resulting in a calamity.

When Hood's army arrived in view of the Union position it was formed in column of attack, and, without a moment's hesitation, swept down in splendid order to overwhelm the National troops. Led by their general officers, knowing their superior numbers, and confident of victory, the Confederates came on, and with a steadiness of movement under the fire of the Federal guns that would have appalled any but thoroughly disciplined troops. The two advanced brigades, though resisting to the last, were enveloped and brushed away, and, rushing back, pursued and pursuers poured over the works in a confused mass. Two Federal batteries were seized in an instant and turned to enfilade the National lines. Fortunately, one of the retreating brigades, leaping over the parapet, turned and, firing a volley into the enemy, manned part of the vacated works. And then was made one of the most remarkable charges on record. The Reserve Brigade, placed there by no act of the commanding general, but by the foresight of its commander, without waiting for orders, and led by Colonel Opdyke and General Stanley, who galloped on the field at that moment, charged the victorious Confederates, and, though suffering fearful loss, drove them with the bayonet over the works, leaving behind them hundreds of their dead and wounded.

The guns were turned again to the front with fatal effect to the enemy.

Again and again Hood sent his charging columns against the Union line, but in vain, and when night fell upon the field, five of his generals lay dead before the intrenchments, six were wounded, while one thousand seven hundred and fifty enlisted men were killed and four thousand wounded.

The credit of this victory belongs to Stanley and Opdyke, and to General Cox, who commanded the Twenty-third Corps. As for Schofield, he was across the Harpath two miles in the rear, and so far from the country being indebted to him for any display of valor or foresight, the great risk and danger of this action, as well as the peril at Springhills were the result of his failure to promptly obey the orders of General Thomas.

The army having escaped from the clutches of Hood's vastly superior force, and crossed the Harpath in time to avoid another flanking move on the part of the Confederates, was now drawn within the defences of Nashville, and the preparations which resulted in Hood's total overthrow were continued.

Now while the self-poise, calm courage, and great energy of General Thomas during the progress of this work must excite the admiration of all who honor true manhood, the course of his superiors in command can only give rise to astonishment and derision.

Sherman, hundreds of miles away, ignorant of the

condition of affairs, but not ignorant of the fact that Thomas had in front of him the very army that had held a hundred thousand veterans under his own command at bay for months, and which he feared to march away from with less than sixty thousand trained soldiers, telegraphed:

"Why he [Thomas] did not turn on him [Hood] at Franklin after checking and discomfiting him, surpasses my understanding."

Why Sherman with his greatly superior forces did not "turn on him" when he lay within reach at Florence, and make an end of him, before going on his holiday jaunt to Savannah, surpasses the understanding of all men save the wilfully blind, self-confident chieftains who write memoirs, and the incompetent adulators who indite so-called history.

The policy of General Thomas was to avoid battle until A. J. Smith's troops should join him, and his scattered detachments could be united. Could he have concentrated his forces at Franklin previous to the action there, he would have risked a general engagement and doubtless could have routed and dispersed Hood's army as he did afterwards at Nashville.

However, as it was, the 1st of December found General Thomas, with all the forces he could possibly gather to stay the Confederate advance, within the fortifications of Nashville. There has been much writing on the subject of the comparative strength of the armies that fought the battles in front of that

city. In this discussion the writers of memoirs and alleged history, moved by petty jealousy, seem to have joined hands with the Confederate general, Hood, in endeavoring to account for his overwhelming defeat, by trying to augment the estimate of the forces of General Thomas, while they make out the Confederate Army as small as possible.

General Thomas estimated Hood's force at about fifty thousand men, while he had, of all arms, including armed citizen employees, newly levied recruits and untried colored troops, about that number at Nashville, where it must be borne in mind he did not fight the Confederate from behind intrenchments, but marched out and drove him from his own in utter rout. Certain it is that Hood marched into Tennessee with the very army that had given Sherman and his one hundred thousand veterans so much trouble between Dalton and Atlanta, intact in its organization, and slightly, if any, reduced in numbers.

After Franklin Hood moved in pursuit of the retreating Nationals, and taking up his position on the hills in front of Nashville, with his flanks extended toward the river on each side, threw up intrenchments. Here, holding Thomas at bay, he proposed to await his expected reinforcements from beyond the Mississippi, and then, having crushed the Union Army, move on in invasion of the North.

General Thomas addressed himself at once to the task of drilling and consolidating the disconnected

detachments at his disposal, and forming them into an army. In this he succeeded as no other general could have succeeded, and yet, at no time from first to last, did he have what could be called an army in the proper meaning of that term. His command consisted of detachments drawn from three armies, some of which had been widely separated, and had never campaigned or fought together. To these were added new recruits, newly levied colored troops, and undrilled armed citizens. The men of these different commands had not been cemented together by the trials and dangers of war, and had not that confidence in each other, that *esprit de corps* that makes thousands as one, gives an army enthusiasm, and renders it invincible. All this had to be supplied and infused into the mass by the will-power, spirit, and energy of the commanding general. General Thomas accomplished all this, and that in the face of the greatest obstacles, quietly, with unbending firmness, and unmoved by the almost insane efforts of his superior officers to force him into action before his army was prepared for the struggle. The nation unquestionably owes more to the unselfish, patriotic devotion and immovable firmness of George H. Thomas at this critical moment than to the whole war work of any other officer who wore her uniform during the civil war.

Putting his army in the best condition possible in the limited time allowed him, General Thomas declared his readiness to attack the enemy's works on

the tenth day of December, but to use his own words, "a terrible storm of freezing rain, covering the hills and valleys with a sleet of ice," bound both Confederates and Nationals to their camps. It was impossible to move the troops. From Richmond's front and from Washington orders to attack poured in upon him, but the calm, heroic man replied:

"I have troops ready to make the attack on the enemy as soon as the sleet which covers the ground has melted sufficiently to enable the men to march. . . . It is utterly impossible for the troops to ascend the slopes, or even move on level ground in anything like order. . . . I believe that an attack at this time would only result in a useless sacrifice of life."

He was determined not to throw away the lives of his men. The authorities seemed frantic. General Logan was sent and reached Louisville on his way to relieve Thomas, and Grant himself started for Nashville. But the Rock of Chickamauga stood firm. Thanks to Divine Providence the friendly sunshine arrived before the distinguished Logan, or his greatly excited chief. The ice melted and General Thomas, having called together his subordinates and explained his plans, and having everything prepared whatever might be the result, moved away from the fortifications on the morning of Dec. 15th to a victory which, in its completeness and results, was one of the most important of the war, and, considering the vast interests at stake, one of the most remarkable of all wars.

Delivering a feint upon the enemy's right, General Thomas moved a strong column commanded by General A. J. Smith, and supported by Wilson's cavalry, upon his left. The cavalry, reaching the enemy's rear by a long circuit, dismounted and fell upon him at the same instant the infantry assaulted his front. The advance was made with great spirit and vigor, and was successful at every point.

Night found the Confederates defeated in every assault, driven from their lines, and forced to take up and fortify a new position.

The 16th of December dawned on the National Army confident of victory, and, as soon as the enemy's new position could be developed, the columns moved to the attack. The assault was successful from right to left. The Confederates were driven, routed and demoralized, from their intrenchments; thousands threw down their arms and surrendered, while the remainder sought safety in a wild, disorderly flight, abandoning arms and material which strewed the roads for miles.

General Hood himself, speaking of this rout, says:

"Our line, thus pierced, gave way. Soon thereafter it broke at all points, and I beheld for the *first and only time* a Confederate army abandon the field in confusion."

As for the cavalry, the delay caused by the remounting of which arm was so condemned by General Grant, its conduct was gallant beyond precedent, and the value of its services cannot be

overestimated. Indeed its action was brilliant in the extreme and did great injury to the enemy. On the 16th Hood despatched Chalmers: "For God's sake drive the Yankee cavalry from our left or all is lost." Thus was the wisdom of General Thomas' determined effort to put his cavalry in fighting trim before battle made manifest and justified.

In fine, not to indulge in detail, the victory at Nashville was as complete over the envious doubters and critics of Thomas as over Hood's shattered army.

I have given the military career of our hero briefly and clearly as I could without going into the mazes of detail that make such reading, to the average reader, a tedious study.

One looks back over that career with a feeling of wonder and admiration mingled with no little indignation. It is passing strange to see, in that wild chaos of blunders and defeats, the work of incompetent pretenders, one man winning continued success and achieving great results for his Government, and that over the obstacles thrown in his way by those who should have held up his arms, and rejoiced at his success.

"The tools to those who can handle them," said a great philosopher, but here was a great man who made the tools he handled. An army or a navy is the work of a race and the growth of generations.

The machinery for killing, the art of war, is not a spontaneous growth, and the war powers that have dominated the earth have come to be such through

long training. This is what the great Mirabeau said to the French Assembly when it proposed to create a navy equal to that of Great Britain by a single act of legislation:

"The English war marine has grown to what it is, like the English oak of which the ships are built, through the slow process of a thousand years. You cannot have a navy without sailors, and sailors are made through the dangers of the deep, from father to son, until their home is on the wave. This cannot be done by an act of legislation."

We Americans had been, through three centuries, engaged in conquering a continent from the wilds of nature, and from that work we turned to the civil pursuits of a healthy peace, and a prosperity that was not only foreign to war, but in direct antagonism to its deadly qualities. When, therefore, our civil war came so unexpectedly it found us not only of a turn hostile to its prosecution, but ignorant of all its necessary training and discipline. In our struggle to win civilization from a wilderness we had, it is true, developed a heroic manhood. We had, therefore, as General Thomas said, the best material on earth of which to make soldiers. He alone of all our generals took in and appreciated the situation. Devoting his wonderful personal magnetism and great force of character, to say nothing of his patient perseverance, to the task, he built up about him an army that was irresistible.

I know that it is wrong to mar the dignified

march of human affairs by the intervention of hero-worship for an individual who, after all, is the creation and not the creator. The whitecaps that mark the coming storm are the result, and not the cause of the commotion. And yet, if ever a man lived to justify this hero-worship next to Abraham Lincoln, George H. Thomas was that man. Most men are great through their defects, as the pearl of the oyster is from a diseased secretion; so great traits in great men are mostly the evidence of an unbalanced force, bad it in itself. None of this applies to General Thomas. I say, without hesitation, that, studying his entire life minutely, and his character with disinterested calmness, one cannot find a single flaw, or the suspicion of a taint. He suffers from this. We are told that the real magnificence of St. Peter's at Rome is lost to the eye through its perfect proportions. General Thomas' character was so well balanced, all the parts so admirably harmonized, that he failed to dazzle the crowd. The most striking thing about him was his constant quietness and self-composure. On the trembling crisis of the war, amid the roar of battle, when every second, almost, seemed fraught with disaster or success, he stood unmoved, with all his faculties as much under control as the army he had trained. The next trait that strikes us was the man's reserve. He seemed shy and solitary, and, perhaps, lived the most lonely life ever awarded a human being upon whom rested such grave responsibilities. Any attempted en-

croachment upon this by the crowd was met by a kindly dignity, while the praise of friends so embarrassed him that it became painful to both.

Looking back over the events of those four years, now that time has cleared away much of the prejudice and passion that blinds the world to the true meaning of these events, we can readily see that had the popular military heroes been put in the field when the Confederacy was in its strength they would not have lasted thirty days. But the Confederacy came to its fall as rapidly as it had risen into power. The ten millions battling with twenty-five millions, with the resources for material in still greater disproportion, went down, after the battle of Gettysburg, from sheer exhaustion, victories for the North became possible, and so common men loomed into uncommon proportions. That is all of the story, so far as these popular favorites are concerned. But we know now that if General Thomas had been put in command of our armies in the beginning of the war, that war would have been shortened by two years without, probably, the loss of a man wantonly and uselessly slaughtered through the imbecility of the officer at the head of the armies.

The Government that gave this great man cold neglect while the war went on, continued its ingratitude after the war had ceased. He who towered above them all, whose achievements will grow brighter as time goes on, was relegated to a subordinate command on the Pacific coast. He accepted

this treatment as he had accepted all former slights, with a calm dignity that not only forbade complaint, but seemed to wipe out the insult of neglect.

George H. Thomas was not a politician, and could not be used by politicians. He could not, like Grant, be the head of one party, nor like McClellan, the idol of another. The war in which he had been so conspicuous had ended, and unless he sold himself to one or the other of the political organizations, there was nothing left him but the quiet of an uneventful life. Efforts were made by many of his enthusiastic friends to make him gifts in evidence of their admiration and gratitude. He said in reference to their efforts in this direction:

"If you have anything to spare, give it to my men, who really accomplished all for which you give me credit, and they need your help."

He had finished his work, and he left the world to make such record as the world saw fit. There was only one moment when he swerved from this, and that moment was his dying one. Stung to the quick by the printed lies that aimed to elevate unworthy inferiors at his expense, upon the strength of what he had accomplished, he seized his pen to remonstrate. Death put its kind hand upon his great heart, and friends found him seated at his table, his head resting upon his arm, all unconscious, and the remonstrance unfinished.

They who knew him best and loved him most, his devoted soldiers, gathered the cannon they had cap-

tured, and, with the consent of the Government, erected a bronze monument to his memory, at the capital his genius did so much to save.

The work of genius commemorating genius, it stands among the works of art that adorn the National Capital as he stood before the world more perfect than all the rest. Sitting calm as was his wont, upon a steed that seems trembling with power under his control, he appears the genius of Victory mastering the brute forces of War.

Thus ends the story, of a heroic life that closes like the dying strains of a grand opera, through which all the deepest, sweetest, and most lofty emotions of the human heart have been thrilled into a new life, and the dreary commonplaces of our ordinary being lifted to the higher plane of a purer and more perfect existence.

# APPENDIX.

## McCLELLAN'S OWN STORY.

SINCE my article on Stanton went to print a book has been published under the above title. It is made up of a biographical sketch, written by W. C. Prime, and extracts from General McClellan's letters to his wife.

Mr. Prime's notion of a life seems to have been taken from Macbeth, where the royal assassin says:

> "Life's but a walking shadow; a poor player,
> That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
> And then is heard no more; it is a tale
> Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
> Signifying nothing."

One gathers from it that McClellan and McClellan's hundred thousand men lived by the consent of Stanton, and that Stanton was a weak, bad man.

A man's greatness can be measured by his enemy. We are all born to have a giant to kill, and as a man selects his giant he instinctively takes one giving him some chance of success. To benefit the memory of McClellan, Mr. Prime should have augmented his giant, instead of seeking to belittle him, for the world knows that McClellan did not destroy Stanton. But Stanton was not the young Napoleon's giant; a gentleman by the name of Lee held, for a brief space, that position, and he made short work of our great organizer.

One rises from a reading of "McClellan's Own Story" with a feeling of depression. It is of sorrow for the author. It were better for his memory had he left his story all un-

told. As the matter stood in the popular mind, he appeared a rather strong man, who went out with a huge army, fought his way to within sight of the Confederate capital, and, although defeated and driven back, yet towered up as a military hero, who, after all these fearful disasters, was solicited by the Government to again take command, and closed his military career with the drawn battle of Antietam. We all know what the Confederacy was when he did this fighting. The belief is reasonable that had the latter-day saints, Grant and Sherman, been in command at that time, the result would have been more disastrous than it was.

"McClellan's Own Story" destroys all these conclusions in his favor. We are awakened to the fact that he was a weak man, cautious almost to cowardice. I mean by this that he lacked that high quality known as moral courage. His one plea, put forward at the beginning, and dwelt upon to the last, is based upon the monstrous assertion that Lincoln was an imbecile, controlled by Stanton, Chase, and Seward, and that these three, especially Stanton, hated him so intensely that they were all the time interfering to defeat his army, in order that they might destroy him. The world is not prepared for this, and the world were a bedlam could such assertion prevail; and yet, eliminate this from the book, and nothing remains. Of course, no one is called on to combat such a wild assertion. We are saved even a denial. Left standing, it tells the melancholy fact that George B. McClellan was a singularly weak man; one that nothing but West Point could have made possible under the circumstances. These circumstances make one shudder. Not only were a hundred thousand brave fellows subjected to peril at the hands of such a man, but the Government itself was on the brink of destruction.

McClellan took command at Washington on the 27th day of July, 1861, and never moved his army until March, 1862.

During all this time he was said to be organizing, and it is claimed for him that he was a great military organizer. Let us see: The troops came to Washington in regiments. These he assigned to brigades, and formed brigades into divisions. This any man could have accomplished in a month. To clothe, equip, and provide tents and transportation for a hundred thousand men was the work of the Quartermaster-General, and General Van Vleit did this work, and did it admirably. What remained was merely the drill, and this the troops never got. Yet it is hardly fair to hold McClellan responsible for this. The armed conflict came suddenly upon a people unused to war, and all the business of preparing men for war was new and strange to us. The volunteers elected their officers, and the officers so elected were as ignorant of military tactics as were their constituents. As I have said elsewhere, all that is taught at West Point is the drill of the private. There is nothing else of war to teach. The West Point drill-sergeants were all made generals, and this left the army of raw recruits without the most necessary part of its organization.

One marvels at McClellan's long delay. Had the forces opposed to him been well-disciplined veterans, there would have been some object in the weary preparations attempted. But the Confederates were as raw as our own militia, although they were far more disposed to take the initiative than we were. The great evil wrought in this delay came from McClellan's methods. These destroyed the little *morale* our army possessed. Satisfied that he was not prepared for war, his main effort consisted in keeping the peace. One order came to be familiar, and that was not to bring on an engagement, while daily bulletins assured the waiting world that all was quiet on the Potomac. Exaggerating in his own cautious, if not timid, mind the strength of the enemy, he infused among his hundred and fifty thousand men the fear of some awful danger that lay coiled

and ready to strike immediately beyond Munson's Hill. When that little affair at Ball's Bluff occurred, in which the gallant Baker fell, and his command was cut to pieces, although a huge force, that might have come to his relief, was lying within striking distance, a feeling of alarm settled upon army and Government; and instead of a court of inquiry, called to ascertain why these men were left to be slaughtered, the young Napoleon was sympathized with, because his general order not to bring on engagements had been treated with such indifference.

The best, indeed the only discipline to give raw recruits was to be found in daily skirmishing with the enemy. Had we been given a dozen, or, if possible, a hundred Ball's Bluffs, our volunteers would have learned the one important lesson that comes of experience under fire; so that, when the time came to move the army, it would have been an army of veterans. McClellan succeeded only in keeping it a militia, and cultivated the dread of an unknown foe, until to a lack of drill was added a woful lack of *morale.*

And now we learn from "McClellan's Own Story," honestly told, that all this time, during all this weary waiting, he was solving a grand scheme for a campaign, so subtle, original, and bold that he dared not submit it to his Government. There existed an ignorance on the part of the Administration that almost justifies the contempt shown on the part of McClellan. Upon the common fact, so generally recognized, of exaggerating the unknown, the civilians called to power jumped to the conclusion that war is a science that, like law or medicine, has to be taught, and that the choicest intellect would be at a loss in applying its rules, unless first carefully trained and instructed. We have not yet learned that beyond the mere school of the soldier there is nothing to learn, and the ablest graduate of West Point has been taught nothing, useful in battle, that the private, if well drilled, does not possess.

That ignorance of the situation existed in Washington

accounts for President Lincoln and his Secretary of War dancing attendance on a full-breasted, epauletted specimen of the weakest commonplace accident ever called to power. The President very respectfully asked the confidence of his general, and got, in return, a solemn shake of the head. The President could not be trusted, and yet all that the solemn shake of the head carried was a campaign that had Richmond for its objective point. Now, Richmond was a place of no strategic or political importance. It could have been occupied by our Government without fetching us any nearer to a solution of the questions involved in the war. It was different with our capital, the loss of which to us meant foreign intervention. It would have been a fact, conclusive in the eyes of foreign governments, that we had failed in our attempt to subjugate the South. As for Richmond, as Wendell Phillips said so tersely, "Lee carried Richmond at his saddle-bow." To defeat Lee was not only to capture Richmond, but to end the war.

The young Napoleon of the Grand Duchess of Gherolstein summed up the art of war when he said that his plan of campaign was "to find the enemy and whip him." The enemy was McClellan's true objective point, and one marvels why he should have moved his vast army over a detour of three hundred miles, by land and water, at an enormous expense, to find his enemy, when that enemy was at his front, on the Potomac. If he were defeated there, such defeat would throw him back on his line of supplies; and if victorious, he would cut the enemy's source of supply and drive him to the sea.

Long after this the Government awakened to the necessity of this sort of campaign, and Grant, with a hundred and forty thousand veterans, was put upon a line on which he said he would fight it out if it took all summer. The summer came to a sudden end in the Wilderness, into which our general tumbled an army he had not the ability to handle. With a hundred and forty thousand men our "greatest

general of the nineteenth century" could have put in sixty thousand to be slaughtered by Lee, who only had that number, while with the remaining eighty thousand he flanked the Confederates. But the general, who scorned strategy, and believed in continual "hammering," suddenly abandoned the "hammering" on the summer line, and swung over to that made memorable by McClellan.

The water-line was more available to Grant than it had been for the young Napoleon, for the ironclads invented by Frémont made the water-courses admirable highways for our armies. A few such off Yorktown would have enabled McClellan to move on toward Richmond without the delay that came of earthworks and siege-guns to reduce the enemy's fortifications.

The sudden and rapid transit of a hundred and ten thousand troops, due to the energy and intelligence of General Van Vleit, evidently surprised the Confederates, and made the stand at Yorktown a necessity, to enable them to concentrate their available forces before Richmond. This being accomplished, they fell back in good order, easily defeating McClellan's pursuing forces at Williamsburgh.

Why this movement should have been made was as much a mystery to the Confederate Government as the ease and rapidity of its accomplishment were a surprise. The stand at Yorktown had, therefore, to be made. Had McClellan known how thin was the line opposed to him, he would have tumbled his troops over the hastily-constructed works before the heavy rains that, following heavy cannonading, had swelled that sluggish stream, the Chickahominy, to the size of a formidable river. But the trouble with McClellan was a regular, habitual exaggeration of the strength of the forces opposed to him. There has appeared, at the same time with "McClellan's Own Story," "Long's Life of Lee," and, reading the two books together, we have light from both sides thrown upon the situation, and learn that the Confederate general had eighty thousand men to oppose the one hundred and ten thousand under McClellan.

Dragging his heavy guns over roads rendered almost impassable by rains, marching his troops ankle-deep in mud, McClellan reached the Chickahominy, and on that insignificant stream broke the back of his army, by getting one-half over just as the sudden rain swept away the rude bridges, leaving the other half as harmless to the enemy as though it had been within the fortifications at Washington. The Confederates were not slow to avail themselves of this opportunity, and, concentrating their entire army, fell upon the half within reach and brought the advance on Richmond to a disastrous close.

McClellan claims that this came of McDowell and his forty thousand men being withdrawn from his command. Looking calmly over the ground, one cannot see that McDowell could have prevented this catastrophe had he been subject to McClellan's orders. It is more than doubtful whether a junction of the two commands could have been effected in time to save the helpless forces on the Chickahominy. Taking our armies in detail, the active, enterprising enemy could have ended the war by the capture of our capital. General McClellan should not have complained of the Government for exercising the same caution for which he was himself distinguished.

The seven days' fighting, or rather retreating toward the James, with enough loss of material to arm and equip Lee's army, ended with the battle of Malvern Hill, where a few subordinate officers and one-third of our army almost annihilated the enemy. Had McClellan followed up this advantage, he could have reorganized his army within the corporate limits of Richmond. We have it from "Long's Life of Lee" that the Confederate general, being a pious man, thanked God for every day given him to fortify and place his shattered forces in a position for defence.

Another grave charge made in this story of the imitation Napoleon is that the Government put a stop to recruiting at a time when, in desperation, he was calling for rein-

forcements. Secretary Stanton learned from Secretary Chase that the Government was straining its credit to the breaking point, and this weakening of our credit by defeat brought our resources dangerously near the end. Capital, ever cautious, had no touch of patriotism, and all the Government was capable of doing began and ended in an appeal to the laborers who gave their toil and bodies to the service. Again, what a general who required eight months to organize an army could expect to do with raw recruits the author of his "Own Story" fails to tell.

McClellan made a continuation of his operations on the James dependent on a fresh supply of troops. He wanted McDowell's command, and the Government, that had seen his huge army driven back, lacked the confidence necessary to uncovering Washington, in order to trust all in his incompetent hands. General Grant, in his "Memoirs," expresses his opinion, by implication, that McClellan should have been trusted, and pronounces Stanton a poor, timid creature for hesitating to comply. We can only say that if Grant had been in command at the time no such emergency could have arisen. The campaign that left a highway of human bones, furnished by our brave men, between the Rapidan and Richmond, where the thinned ranks and exhausted resources of the Confederacy presented only the skeleton of an army, tells a story that destroys General Grant's power as a military critic.

The Government could furnish no more food for powder to the impatient general, and both he and his army were withdrawn from the James at a ruinous sacrifice, and all returned again to the fortifications at Washington; and there occurred an event which "McClellan's Own Story" fails to justify, or even explain. Upon the withdrawal of our army from the James, Lee hurried his entire force of eighty thousand men to the Rapidan, for the purpose of overwhelming the troops under Pope before McClellan could come to the rescue. When the great Confederate

chief found himself face to face with Pope's army, to accomplish which he had marched rapidly, he was guilty of the strangest false manœuvre ever put to military record. He divided his army in two, and sent one-half through Thoroughfare Gap, to the rear of Pope. He lost three days at a time when every hour held the fate of the Confederacy, and at the end of that time awakened to the fact that, instead of overwhelming Pope, he had completely reversed conditions, and put half of his army in between Pope and McClellan. The half he held on Pope's front was not within supporting distance of the apparently doomed men so strangely thrown into the trap, and had McClellan co-operated with Pope and closed in on the Confederates, they would have been doomed, and the war ended on the same battlefield where it began.

McClellan was at Alexandria, and the larger part of his army was in position to move. One reads the telegrams and orders between the Government and the general with amazement and indignation. To the almost frantic appeals of the Government to hurry forward his forces there came responses so insolent that they are hard to believe. When he coolly advised the Government to let Pope get out of his scrape as best he could, the young Napoleon should have been shot by a drum-head court-martial. The roar of the terrible conflict was in his ears, and it was not Pope, but the thousands of brave fellows under him, who were being killed or mangled in a vain struggle that might have been made a startling victory.

As it was, Longstreet, by forced marches, arrived in time to succor Jackson and turn a disastrous affair, on the part of Lee, into a victory. The only part of McClellan's army that reached the field in time to be of service was the corps under Fitz-John Porter, and he refused co-operation at a time when it was of vital importance. Had he made a demonstration, instead of lying idle all of the 29th, he would have defeated Stonewall Jackson, for he was on the flank

of the rebel forces. Or if, as he claims, Longstreet had arrived, and was at his front, he would have made that fact clear, and have given Pope the light he needed to cause him to fall back behind Centreville. Fitz-John Porter was tried by the court that condemned, and the court that acquitted, on certain orders Pope had sent him. These orders had nothing whatever to do with the issue. His duty as a soldier was in the unwritten laws of war To understand this, let the reader suppose for a moment that McClellan had held the place filled by Pope, would this man Porter have waited for orders? He was brave and capable, but the same disloyal spirit his chief showed in the telegrams from Alexandria held his subordinate to a sneering indifference and inaction, while his comrades were being slaughtered to no purpose.

That, after all this, McClellan should have been reinstated in his command, only goes to show the state of distress to which the Government was reduced. McClellan was fairly worshipped by his troops, but this popularity he had gained at the expense of the Government. The man who, through all his story, speaks contemptuously of "the poor creatures," Lincoln, Stanton, and Chase, and laments the unhappy condition of his country as subject to such malignant imbeciles, had taught his soldiers this; and, in addition, that this Abolition Administration at Washington had abandoned them to their fate. This feeling was so rife among the rank and file that when President Lincoln visited the army on the James, it was feared that he would be insulted, and orders were issued for the troops to cheer on his appearance. It was necessary to fetch the army back to the fortifications of Washington before venturing to change commanders, and when the army was before Washington the President feared a mutiny, should he remove McClellan, and it certainly would have occurred had an attempt been made to supersede him with Pope, a man whose military capability and patriotism put him head and

shoulders above McClellan and his group of West Pointers.

Looked at from a purely military point of view, there was no necessity for superseding McClellan. He was certainly superior to his immediate successors, Burnside, Hooker, and Meade, and compared favorably with the majority of commanders distinguished in the war. Except Thomas and Rosecrans, all learned the art of war through defeat. It was an awful school, built on bones and cemented with the best blood of the country, but it was accepted. The blood and bones are nearly forgotten. The vast cemeteries of silent dead serve a purpose, when visited once a year to strew flowers over the humble graves, but the nation thinks only of the few leaders who won monuments through incapacity.

However, the memory of McClellan survives the war in glory because he was a Democrat, precisely as Grant has his monument in the hearts of the Republicans for that he loaned his name to secure a perpetuation of their power. The greater man than either, the grandest soldier of all, George Henry Thomas, has dust gathering on his humble tomb, because he scorned the dirty arena where such reputations were made.

McClellan can be summed up in few words.

He had the egotism of a weak character, that he and his friends mistook for the confidence of genius. This made him arrogant on parade and timid in the presence of a grave responsibility. He habitually magnified obstacles into impossibilities, and deferred great deeds to a future that had no possibility. A brave soldier, he made a timid general, and thus when he broke the back of his huge army on the Chickahominy, he stood resolutely by the half not engaged, and while the battle of Malvern Hill was raging he consulted maps and planned campaigns in a gunboat on the James.

McClellan would have been continued in command had he confined himself to his military duties. But he had an

evil genius unknown to himself and unknown to both friends and enemies. At Cincinnati, shortly after being called from civil life to the camp, McClellan selected the Hon. Stanley Mathews, then of the Superior Court of Cincinnati, now Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, to serve on his staff as Judge Advocate. When this became known, and before Judge Mathews had accepted the place, Judge Thomas M. Key approached the newly-selected Judge Advocate, with a request that he would decline in his favor. Judge Mathews complied, and Key was thus brought in personal contact with the man he was to dominate.

How strangely human events seem to turn on trifles! Had Judge Mathews refused to give way, McClellan would not have been saved the terrible defeats on the Chickahominy, but, like all the others, save Thomas and Rosecrans, he would have been permitted to learn the art of war through defeat, instead of being summarily dismissed for having tried the rôle of political oracle and dictator to the Administration.

A native of Kentucky, Thomas M. Key was imbued from birth with the peculiar traits of the South; but, while impulsive in his ways, differed from his associates in being a student. To his naturally great ability he added wide and varied stores of knowledge. Called to the Superior Court of Cincinnati, at an early age for such a position, he won the respect of the bar by the dignity of his bearing, his singular legal acumen, and the courage of his decisions. He procured position on McClellan's staff, and not only won the confidence of his general, but, from an eccentricity of genius, sought to lose himself in the man. He seemed satisfied in this self-immolation through the sense of power it gave, and the strong assertion of the peculiar views with which the confidential aid was penetrated.

General McClellan was a Democrat because he was a West Pointer. That little school on the Hudson was, as I

have said elsewhere, more of a social than a military affair. As we copied the organization of our army from the English, whose born aristocracy furnished officers, we sought to make an aristocracy through a school, where the cadet should graduate into a command, with a great gulf fixed between himself and the private soldier. As the South, before the late war, furnished us with our social aristocracy, and as the South was Democratic, the officer gravitated into that political condition. Of the traditions, teachings, and principles of the Democratic party McClellan knew as little as any other West Point graduate.

A brilliant conversationalist, Key was, at the same time, a charming companion, two qualities seldom found in the same person. The suggestive mind given to expression in talk is apt to bore the listener with a persistency of views that either weary or offend. Key had the subtle flattery of a listening face. He practised this on McClellan, not because of McClellan's superior rank, for at the time he was only a militia general, having been selected by the Governor of Ohio to organize the State volunteers. It was the practice of Key's life to listen much and talk little. He felt the truth of the saying, attributed to Mirabeau, that to succeed in life one must be content to learn from those who know less on a given subject than the listener. Key soon possessed and controlled McClellan without the soldier's being aware of his lost identity. He died in this ignorance, and the man speaking through him, and who proved his ruin, was as unknown to his victim as he is to the world.

McClellan became a Key Democrat, and it was a strange mixture of Abolitionism, States' rights, patriotism, and a love of the South. Key wanted the Southern armies defeated and the States recognized as they were before the war. He sought to free the slaves and compensate the masters. He upheld the Government, but despised Lincoln, Stanton, and Seward; in a word, he had a deep-seated contempt for the Administration.

I am giving from letters and memory the peculiar opinions of Key, and the reader can verify them by examining "McClellan's Own Story." He can find them, more especially, condensed in that extraordinary letter which the defeated general gave with his own hand to the President at Harrison's Bar. One reads of that incident and studies that letter with amazement, not unmingled with amusement. That a man of McClellan's calibre should take upon himself the task of teaching Abraham Lincoln his political duties fills one with a sense of the ludicrous, and laughter is only restrained by the gravity of the assumption. The general, coming forth from fields of defeat, takes on himself all the duties of the Government which he has so grievously embarrassed.

This has but one parallel in the history of the war, and that occurred when General Sherman, the hero of disaster, undertook to settle all the complicated terms of reconstruction, in accepting the surrender of Johnson's army.

The press of the United States, always silly when excited, made McClellan a great man in the eyes of his army. It was Key, aided by McClellan's military household, that supplemented this with a contempt and hatred for the Administration. The soldiers were taught to regard the authorities at Washington as nothing other than a nest of Abolitionists, that had abandoned them to disease and death upon the James; willing to consign them to destruction, that their beloved leader might be removed. Small wonder that these poor fellows scowled at President Lincoln, and could scarcely be restrained from open insult, while they cheered to the echo their general, as he dashed along their ranks, physically a superb specimen of epauletted greatness.

Matters grew serious in this direction. The reader who doubts has only to turn to "McClellan's Own Story," and he will find every page bristling with assertions and assumptions in the way I indicate. Key himself grew alarmed. He told me, long after those days, that, while on the James, he

and McClellan were riding in from a visit to a distant camp, where the soldiers, breaking ranks, had crowded about him, filling the air with cheers, when, after a long silence, McClellan said:

"How these brave fellows love me, and what a power that love places in my hands! What is there to prevent my taking the Government in my own hands?"

Key was startled, and hastened to say: "General, don't mistake those men. So long as you lead them against the enemy, they will adore and die for you; but attempt to turn them against their Government, and you will be the first to suffer."

The answer irritated McClellan. He replied with his spurs, urging his horse into a gallop, and leaving Key, with his inferior mount, to follow as he might. Both Key and the Government were unnecessarily alarmed. Crimes classify themselves, not only by the inclination, but the ability of the criminals. A sneak-thief is not a burglar, nor is a burglar intuitively a murderer. McClellan was not the sort of man to endanger the Government by treason, for he came near wrecking it through the very weakness that saved him from being a Catiline.

Key was his evil genius. He shut him out from the school of generalship based on defeat, that in the end would, probably, have won him success. Looking back, it is astonishing to note the amount of important work accomplished by the man so unknown to history. All the time McClellan was organizing about Washington, Key was busy bringing about the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia. It seems strange now that there should have been any difficulty. But the Republican party was new and exceedingly timid. It could enact a prohibitory tariff, and so offend all Europe; but it dare not free one slave, for fear of angering the Democrats. The man who subsequently took to himself the credit of accomplishing this measure, Senator Wilson, of Massachusetts, was its most bitter opponent. He gave way at the

last moment, when the success of the move was assured, and then, hurrying to the front, led the majority, and claimed all the reward.

The work of making McClellan a political oracle was overdone. The Government at Washington took the alarm. As I have said, it was an unnecessary panic. The only officials who remained calm were Lincoln and Seward. The first did so because he had taken the measure of the young Napoleon, and the other for that he understood the elements at work, and knew that, as Key had said, the volunteers could not be used against the Government they had enlisted to preserve. They represented the American people, and while the American people may succumb, helplessly, to an incorporated monopoly, or the continuation of such, they will never tolerate a military dictator. McClellan was doomed. The great characters at the capital, called by a wise Providence to the control of our Government, when that Government trembled on the verge of ruin, used McClellan so far as he could be made useful, and then quietly set him aside. The man who honestly sought to make him great made him a failure. "McClellan's Own Story" should tell this, but the name of his familiar seldom appears, and when it does, it is as that of an orderly. This obscurity suited Key. Had his chief been a great success, this shrinking from observation would have been the same. This was not the result of a morbid condition. It seemed to be the normal and healthy nature of the man. When he returned to Cincinnati, to die from disease contracted on the field of Antietam, he purchased a lot in Spring Grove Cemetery, and erected a monument, upon which he would permit no inscription, not even his name. Loving hands have since supplied the necessary legend of birth and death, but in lieu thereof there should be inscribed upon the obelisk: *The Evil Genius of George B. McClellan!*

## GRANT AND SHERMAN ON THOMAS.

THE student of history who confines himself to the Memoirs of Grant and Sherman for the standing of Thomas will be poorly informed, or rather deplorably misinformed. The patronizing manner in which the hero of Nashville is damned with faint praise would amuse were it not so exasperating. Both these popular idols unite in commending Thomas as an excellent officer, but too slow to be entrusted with a separate command.

He was slow to cause useless slaughter of the brave soldiers under his command, but he was swift to strike when the stroke became urgent and promised success, and the fact that he never suffered defeat proves the soundness of his judgment. His loving heart made him shrink from needless loss of the noble troops depending on his soldierly ability, while his patriotic impulses made life as nothing when his country demanded the sacrifice.

He was not the man to order a hopeless assault on an impregnable position that could have been turned without loss, as it subsequently was, and send in a report of the loss of fifteen hundred killed and wounded, with the excuse that he had wasted these lives to teach his troops that the old man would fight.

General Thomas was not the man to expose his camp, in the presence of the enemy, to a shameful surprise and a horrible butchery while he remained drinking on a gunboat ten miles from the scene of disaster.

Nor could George H. Thomas have remained in his tent for three days while, under the scorching midsummer's sun of a southern clime, hundreds of his dead lay rotting, and his wounded writhing in agony on the awful slope he had

wantonly assaulted, until the agonizing cries of the one, and the stench of the other, sweeping over Vicksburg, filled the Confederates with horror, and brought, under a flag of truce, a message which said:

"For God's sake remove your dead and care for your wounded or I will."

I know the accepted excuse for this is that our great general, when he ordered the assault and left his dead and dying uncared for, was under the influence of that whiskey which President Lincoln wished distributed among our other generals.

General George Henry Thomas fought his way through to renown under the disfavor of the Government he served, and he survived the war to suffer keenly the neglect and cold commendation of his associates in arms, who were jealous of his success and fearful of his fame. He was not the man to complain, but that he felt deeply the following letter tells. So silent was he that the few words he put to paper speak volumes.

WASHINGTON, D. C., March 8, 1869.

DR. J. S. HALE.

*Dear Sir:*

. . . . . .

I could not possibly have any influence, because General Grant is not a friend of mine, and would not be disposed to accommodate me in any way, if public opinion did not compel him to do so.

. . . . . .

Respectfully,

GEO. H. THOMAS.

## VON MOLTKE AS A CRITIC.

IT is the habit of the newspaper guild to scoff at criticisms made by civilians on war matters, as something impudent and absurd. Thus when Mr. Samuel R. Reid published his masterly dissection of Grant's conduct at Vicksburg, the only response was a sneer at a man who never set a squadron in the field presuming to criticise the war men and their campaigns.

These gentlemen forget, if they ever knew, that all we have of accepted war records comes from the pens of civilians. To enforce their rule would be to take from our libraries all the great histories of a troubled past. The men-killers are not gifted as authors, and when they do indulge their efforts are not reliable. To lie like a bulletin has come to be a proverb, and a bulletin is a condensed report. From the day of Julius Cæsar to that of Napoleon we find a continued line of fiction in this direction. That eminent divine and teacher, Alexander Kinmont, once suggested to his class to estimate, from Cæsar's enumeration of the hosts of Gauls he encountered and killed, the population of the country he conquered, allowing five members of a family to each Gaul. The result was ludicrous.

To satisfy the carping critics, however, I give here a criticism of Von Moltke on that summer excursion of Sherman's to the sea, that is so idiotically eulogized and sung by our simple folk. Here it is:

Said Von Moltke to an American officer:

"In that movement from the front to some point on the coast where the fleet could relieve the army, there was a successful march because no enemy was in the way to make

it perilous. Having no objective point, in a military sense, to make such a movement advisable the military man is at a loss to know why the enemy so long combated, at a heavy expense of lives and treasure, should be left to regain all that had been lost. Accidents may be taken advantage of but never calculated on, and it was by the merest accident that the enemy did not regain through that movement of the United States Army all that had been secured through years of campaigning and hard fighting."

## DANGERS FROM FRANCE.—TESTIMONY OF HON. L. Q. C. LAMAR.

KNOWING that the Hon. L. Q. C. Lamar was possessed of valuable information as to the designs of the French Government looking to interference during our late civil war, I sought that gentleman with the following results :

I asked him if Hood's proposed invasion from the Tennessee was in furtherance of Louis Napoleon's design of interference in behalf of the Confederate Government. He replied that so far as the action of the authorities at Richmond was concerned he was uninformed and could not answer.

"I know very well," said he, "that Louis Napoleon was not only in favor of interfering in our behalf, but warmly so. I was received kindly and spoken to with the utmost frankness upon the subject by members of his Government. There were two obstacles in his way. One was the fact of our institution of slavery which would make intervention in our behalf unpopular among the masses of the French people. The other was his need of a naval power, like England or Russia, as an ally in the movement of intervention. The Count de Morney, the Emperor's confidential adviser, opened his mind to me very freely, and gave assurances that made us hope, with reason, for the intervention sooner or later of the Imperial Government of France. On one occasion I was shown a private note from the Emperor in which he intimated a purpose to give a positive order which, had it not been revoked, would have brought on the intervention so confidently expected.

"As the struggle went on in its first stage, when the Confederate cause had so many victories to its credit, the Emperor was inclined to believe that we could win without

outside intervention. When the tide began to turn, through the exhaustion of our resources, the Emperor became deeply interested, so there was at least as much danger to the Federal Government when we were losing as there was when we were successful. At any time before the cause grew utterly desperate the way was open to an intervention from France. Had Hood defeated Thomas and won his way to the Ohio, it would most probably have had a potent influence in bringing about that intervention.

"The motive for this cause on the part of the Emperor was not altogether a sentiment.

"In the blockade of the Southern ports France suffered as England suffered, only in a less degree. Perhaps the French Government felt it more deeply than the English, because in France the laboring classes had been taught and trained to look to the Government for subsistence. When this failed the Government was held responsible. Now, President Lincoln's navy had not only established a blockade, but his friends in Congress had enacted a high protective tariff which was irritating to Europe at the very time when Mr. Seward was courting favors from the European Governments; and when the news spread abroad that the Government of the North, failing to perfect its blockade, was sinking ships loaded with stone in the channels, so as to destroy Southern harbors, the complaints in Europe were very great.

"Again, it was a cherished policy of the Emperor to make his régime distinguished for its friendship to peoples struggling for independence and nationality. You remember his intervention in the Italian struggle. He was also suspected, and I think with good reason, of fomenting the Polish Rebellion against Russia, and at the time that I was in Europe his, the Emperor's, influence in Russian councils, which had been very great, had not only been destroyed, but there was a general expectation of hostile relations between the two Empires, France and Russia.